Tracking Bayani Agbayani
Results ng US elections, gregoy o digregoy?
Vote o Zit? Tyri Nasi 29-9 nowt
Across / A15
100,000 jeep drivers go on strike
World / A11
Bush to seek ban on same-sex marriage
News / A4
'Port rivalry at heart of Sesoloy fight'
Entertainment / A17
Richer in experience, richer by P1M

Mystery bulge in Bush suit jacket explained

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

RP not out of woods yet, says De Venecia

By TJ Burgonio
and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

Tuesday, November 9, 2004 • 34 pages / vol. 19 / no. 335
website: www.inq7.net

Meralco rates up anew

Consumers to pay ₱1.36 more per kWh

By Abigail L. Ho
Reporter

UNLESS they are willing to pay more, households may have to cut down on the use of electricity by switching off lights early at night, reducing TV viewing, or refraining from using the air-con, if they have one, in the cool "ber months."

Starting this month, a household in Metro Manila and neighboring provinces consuming 500 kilowatt-hours a month will have to shell out an additional P682.00; because of soaring power rates.

Households using 400 kWh a month will have to pay an additional P546.88. Those consuming 300 kWh will pay P409.36 and those using 200 kWh, P272.04.

The higher rates in total of P1,368 per kWh are due to a sharp increase in the generation charges of the state-owned National Power Corp. (Napocor) and the (un)bundling of cross subsidies.

The Secretary, the monthly charges of Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) will go up 36 percent, or almost P1.00 per kWh, to reflect the increase in Napocor charges.

From the current 0.5¢/kwh kWh, the Meralco charges to customers every month, the rate will go up to 34.23 as a result of the Energy Regulatory Commission-approved Napocor rate increase, as well as other costs that go into the bill as a result of power distribution.

The other costs include the generation rate adjustment mechanism (GRAM), a pass-through charge that Meralco collects every quarter to cover the costs of power from Napocor and independent power producers First Gas Power Corp. and Quezon Power Philippines Ltd., and the incremental currency exchange rate adjustment, a recovery mechanism for foreign exchange fluctuations.

Aguel: Even the rate increase as a result of the rise in the Napocor generation charge, residential and general service customers will have to bear paying 28.52 centavos more per kWh this month.

Small industrial users will pay an additional 40.62 centavos per kWh and government hospitals, 22.16 centavos.

This is due to the removal of 40 percent of the cross subsidy that large commercial and industrial users were providing smaller power consumers. The remaining 60 percent of the cross-cross subsidy will be removed by October next year as mandated by the ERC.

FINANCIAL A1

PRINCESS Joyce Sobilar, a Grade I pupil in the Cainta Elementary School in Cainta, Rizal, rejoices after receiving a bite of rice from President Arroyo during the launching of the government's Food for School program.

Gov't starts rice rations through kids in schools

By Veh Contreras
and Julier Ludeg Javellana

AT THE end of this school year, each pupil shall have brought home almost two cavans of rice.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development yesterday kicked off its five-month Food for School program that would have some 50,000 children (on) two centers for their impoverished families in Metro Manila and three neighboring provinces.

As a gauge of the success of the project in terms of improving their health, the schoolchildren will be weighed monthly. The rice ration is to complete formula, albeit off, "fortified" with vitamins, social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman said.

The rice subsidy is part of the government's response to a Social Weather Stations survey last month that showed some 910 spaces were going hungry.

"We're not yet in that situation of [widespread] hunger, but we're already taking this affirmative action so we will not get there," Soliman told reporters.

Many of the children looked like they had just received early Christmas gifts when they got their kilo-bags of rice. Their faces lighted and one girl hugged her bag, like it was a precious doll.

Another lifted hers high over her face as though she was thanking the heavens.

But one girl was tousled by the hardest on a different level.

STORY FEATURES A10

Nayan's family appeals to captors to free him

By TJ Burgonio

THE FAMILY of Angelito Nayan yesterday begged his captors to spare his life as Philippine officials scrambled to try and save the diplomat being held hostage in Afghanistan and another Filipino taken captive in Iraq.

"My brother, Angelito, went to help the people of Afghanistan as a volunteer—not in anti-military political faction or for any vested interest," Nayan's elder sister, Grace, said in a statement released by the Department of Foreign Affairs. "He went to your country with the purest of intentions. Please, we beg you, please set him free."

"My family and I would like to reiterate our appeal to (the Israeli's) abductors to please spare his life and let him return to the Philippines," (Grace said, adding: "My brother's life hangs in the balance. We pray and appeal for solidarity in this time of crisis."

The rioters launched the appeal a day after Taliban-linked militants holding the 39-year-old Nayan and two other Iraqis threaten election workers not with intermediaries in southern Afghanistan and indicated they might soften up on some of their demands.

Elsewhere, Bahrain's prime minister pledged to help secure the release of Filipino accountant Robert Tarongoy as Philippine Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo urged Iraqi gunmen to "find reports and volunteers.

Pope and her mother Carlog Ali, had reportedly been refused help by government officials here and abroad, robbed by a kidnapping (countertrust in Australia and criticized by a skeptical local media upon her return.

Nevertheless, her conviction, like her faith, remains unchanged. She loves her country.

"I am a Filipino. I grew up learning that Filipinos are looked down on. What happened is an has not changed the way I feel about being a Filipina," Nora tells the Inquirer in an interview at Crossroads 77, the Brisbane Lifehead office in Queensland City.

The storm stunned the (then spread) days when news broke that the ninth grader at St. James College, Quezon City, had beaten representatives of 56 other nations in the International Science Quiz Bee in Brisbane, Australia, in September.

The road to Brisbane was not strewn with roses.

First, Faye said, she had to pass an exam given by science specialists with the (not and submit a thesis manuscript.

Then, Faye had her 100-page thesis, "The Effect of Ionized Radiation on the Philippine Fruit Fly" was inspired by her mother's numerous flown to cytogenetics. Faye said

SCIENCE A10

Despite doubts, 12-yr-old girl keeps faith in RP

By Blancher S. Rivera

SOME doubt her stamina. Many challenge her story. But few if at all, dare question her faith.

Nor Nicole San Jose, 12, has shown she would dare deep faith in God and love for country will help anyone succeed against all odds.

Her deepest triumph is an international science contest is now the subject of e-mails and letters and has become the topic of news

US Marines take firing positions on the outskirts of Fallujah in Iraq.

US military begins assault of Fallujah

NEAR FALLUJAH—Backed by a barrage from warplanes and artillery, American troops fought their way into the western outskirts of Fallujah on Monday using a hospital and two bridges over the Euphrates River in the first stage of a major assault on the insurgent stronghold.

The US military said Iraqi troops captured 36 people, including four foreigners when they swept into the first objective—Fallujah's main hospital, which the military said Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi said were under insurgent control.

Iraqi soldiers stormed through the facility, blasting open doors and pulling handcuffed patients into the halls in search of gunmen.

Allawi said he had given the green light for international and Iraqi forces to launch the long-awaited offensive against Fallujah, considered the strongest bastion of Iraq's fierce insurgency. "We are determined to clean Fallujah of terrorism," he said.

Allawi initially said 38 people were killed in the hospital assault, but the US military later said the people were captured.

Throughout the morning, artillery and mortars pounded targets in Fallujah and on its outskirts, and a US jet swooped low in the sunken at insurgent positions.

US AND STORY A11

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2004

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

Garcia asks Jago to dismiss case

By Alexis Puga and Philip C. Tubeza

ADDED Armed Forces of the Philippines comptroller Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia yesterday asked the Judge Advocate General to dismiss the military charges against him, saying the charge sheet he was served was defective.

But AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu told reporters there was no stopping the court-martial of Garcia, who denied accused of accumulating assets not commensurate to his salary and not declaring these in his Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN).

Closed-door meeting

In a closed-door meeting in the office of Lt. Col. Al Petronio, Judge Advocate General's Office (Jago) military justice division chief, Garcia submitted his sworn affidavit on the charges against him.

The media was not allowed to in the office despite Petronio' earlier promise that the proceedings would be open to the public.

"I answered the hearing here at my office and it was placed on record that the respondent Major General Garcia has submitted his counter-affidavit. There were many issues presented by the lawyer of General Garcia, Attorney Constantino de Jesus, (and those) will be considered in the resolution of the case," Petronio said.

Garcia's counter-affidavit

As of press time yesterday, Petronio had yet to release copies of Garcia's counter-affidavit as he had also promised. He told reporters in the morning that he had still to read the documents.

Later, reporters learned that Garcia had submitted two documents to Petronio.

The first was a 10-page motion for dismissal of the court-martial charges filed Saturday by Garcia's lawyer de Jesus, and the second was a 30-page counter-affidavit.

Garcia argued that the charges violated Section 1, Rule 116 of the Revised Rules of Criminal Procedure, which provides for the arraignment of the accused before the court-martial.

Garcia also argued that the charges violated Section 1, Rule 117 of the Revised Rules of Criminal Procedure for Stipulation of Admissions (hereinafter on the Objection Defects of the Charge Sheet."

The second was a four-page petition titled "Counter Affidavit with Prayer to Dismiss the Charge Sheet for being Defective and on Grounds of Pending Appeal with the Chief of Staff and Pending Petition for Declaratory Relief and Prohibition with the Court of Appeals."

House arrest

Apparently, while under house arrest by the AFP, Garcia was able to file an appeal with former Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya and a petition in the Court of Appeals to stop the Ombudsman from also investigating him.

In a 10-page petition filed last Friday, Garcia asked the appellate court to stop the Ombudsman's investigation until the court ruled on his contention that only civilian court could try him.

Garcia urged the appeals court to declare as unconstitutional the Ombudsman Act of 1989, claiming that it gave the Ombudsman the power to prosecute cases when the Constitution says it could only investigate graft.

"Despite the fact that there remains a prejudicial issue regarding the service-connected nature of the charges filed against petitioner, (the Ombudsman and Jago) continue to conduct their separate investigations, thus resulting in multiplicity of suits which, therefore, warrants prohibition," Garcia said.

Charge sheet

The Jago on Oct. 26 served Garcia with the charge sheet which detailed the court-martial charges against him.

Garcia is charged with violating Article of War 96, or conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, and Articles of War 97, or disorder and neglect prejudicial to good order and military discipline, for accumulating large land estates and not declaring these in his SALN.

Petronio told reporters he would need "one or two days" to evaluate the evidence at hand before making a recommendation to Abu to either convene the court-martial or dismiss the charges against Garcia.

"I have 90 days within which to evaluate the case. Of course, based on the procedures, I have all the time to evaluate the case. But definitely, I need only one or two days to evaluate the evidences," he said.

Court-martial

But Abu told reporters in a chance interview that Garcia's court-martial would proceed immediately.

"When I receive the report from our pro that (investigation officer (Pereyra), I will approve the proceedings (and) name the members of the general court-martial," Abu said.

Earlier, eight senior officers were assigned to the short list of those who would try Garcia. Court-martial rules stipulate that an officer can only be tried before a court-martial composed of officers senior to him or equal in rank.

But Judge Advocate General Brig. Gen. Manuel Lloma, reading yesterday before the media solicitations on national defense and budget and other financial recommendations, said the military will observe its tradition of trying an officer "as much as practicable" by his peers.

Only two officers with ranks lower than Garcia's will be involved—Lloma, a one-star general, being the JAG, and a colonel who will be appointed in last seconders.

"There is no specific provision in the Articles of War or in the Manual of Court-Martial that says that he should be tried by an officer senior to him," Lloma said at night to a query by Rep. Teresito Nicolas Quiño-Jaz, Western Bukidnon (Quiño-Jaz, Western Bukidnon). With Cynthia D. Rubeno

GMA taps women power to raise taxes

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday tapped "women power" to push for tax measures in Congress.

The Chief Executive tendered a luncheon in Malacañang for the 56 women members of the 13th Congress.

Presidential Political Adviser Gabriel Claudio said Ms Arroyo was counting on the legislators to use the "persuasive power of women" on their male colleagues to get them to pass the President's right-out measures necessary to plug the budget deficit.

"Everybody expressed support [for the tax measures]," said Claudio in a phone interview after the luncheon.

Solidarity

He said Las Piñas Rep. Cynthia Villar, who led the women, expressed "solidarity with the President and support for her programs," especially the tax bills.

Claudio said the luncheon was primarily a "bonding" session between the President, a former senator, and the present legislators.

He said the issue of taxes was prominently discussed during the "jovial" and cordial lunch, the first with the group since the May elections.

'No sin'

The congresswomen even agreed that the excise taxes on alcohol, cigarettes and tobacco should not be called "sin" taxes.

"Some of them are smokers and they do not want to be associated with sin," Claudio said.

That was why he said, they came up with the "ACT BIR" for alcohol, cigarettes and tobacco.

Of the 56 congresswomen, only 23 made it to the luncheon. Aside from Villar, they were Rodina Nicolas Bukidnon, Trinidad Apostol Geyle), Josefina Jones (Nueva Ecija), Magalong (Lanao (Laguna), Rebeca Cobilles (Lumbayanque de Sibugay), Luisa Silverio (Bukidnon), Nanette Daza (Zamboanga City), Remedios Perlla (Leyte)

Victoria Reyes (Batangas), Loreta Bendijo (Albayan party-list), Herminia Abad (Batanes), Ana York Bondoc (Pampanga), Gloria Bellaso (Batangas), Carmen Cari (Leyte), Cecilia Jalosjos (Zamboanga del Norte), Glenda Ochoa (Antigua del Norte).

Janet Garin (Iloilo), Urbin Joaquin (Laguna), Ma. Milagros Magsaysay (Zambales), Claud Martinez (Cebu), Fernandina Romero (Misamis Occidental), Mary Ann Romero (Quezon City), Judy Ngwen (Iloilo) and Ma. Amelita Villarosa (Occidental Mindoro).

At the Senate, its leadership wanted passage that the "sin" taxes would be passed before the Christmas break on Dec. 17.

Not in the mood

But the opposition in the chamber seemed to be in a far from cooperative mood, saying there was no need to talk the new taxes after President Arroyo had declared the fiscal crisis over.

Minority Leader Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. even went one step further by asking the President to return the contributions given by businessmen to the "Bayanihan Fund," which was put up to help the government deal with the fiscal crisis.

But Senate President Franklin Drilon told foreign government officials who inspected the Senate yesterday to push for the passage of the revenue measures that the 14-member majority "agreed we must support the tax issues. I think there is support across party lines in the Senate."

Also yesterday, Speaker Jose de Venecia told the House was willing to extend the time halfway on the "sin" taxes, particularly it constituting revenue yield. With Christine O. Avendaño, Cynthia D. Rubeno and Michael Lim Ubac

Senate OK of new UP charter seen

DESPITE last week's emotional outburst by Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago which marred floor deliberations on the proposed new charter of the University of the Philippines, Senate leaders are confident the chamber would approve the new UP charter.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said over the weekend he saw "no serious opposition" to the proposed measure.

"I am confident that the UP charter will receive support from our colleagues," Drilon said in a phone interview.

But Drilon said Santiago would propose amendments to the UP charter, particularly by introducing a new definition of "academic freedom," a term which she had questioned following the suicide death of her son, Alexander Robert.

Santiago earlier threatened to block the passage of the new UP charter after she blamed anew UP law officials for the death of her son.

The senator wants UP authorities to submit a memorandum to her before Nov. 15 detailing the names and addresses of the admissions committee that denied entry to her son as well as on how they came to such a decision.

Majority Leader Sen. Francis Pangilinan, who is defending the UP charter bill, said the Senate hopes to pass the bill, which seeks to amend the UP charter and turn the state university into a national university, before Congress adjourns session for the Christmas holidays.

The House of Representatives, on the other hand, has yet to come up with a committee report on the proposed UP charter bill. *Christine O. Avendaño*

ATTENTION LAWYERS!

The deadline for the first compliance period of the **Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE)** is on December 31, 2004. *Have you fully complied?*

Legis Forum, Inc., an accredited MCLE provider, shall conduct a full 36-unit MCLE course in **MAKATI CITY** on November 13, 20 and 27 and December 4, 2004. **Credits earned can be credited to both the first & second compliance periods.**

Avoid being listed as a delinquent member of the IBP and consequently, not permitted to practice law! **REGISTER NOW!**

Registration Form (Please Check ✓)

☐ **Full 36-unit MCLE course**
☐ **Half -day MCLE seminar (a.m. sessions: 8:00-12:15; p.m. sessions: 1:00-4:15), as follows:**

	Date	Credit Units/Subject Per Bar Matter 850	Lecturer
☐	Nov. 13 a.m.	2/MCLE Prescribed: Electronic Evidence 2/Oral Advocacy	Atty. Ivan John E. Uy Justice Magdangal M. De Leon
☐	Nov. 13 p.m.	2/Updates in Criminal Law 3/Updates in Constitutional & Election Law	Justice Diosdado M. Peralta Justice Regalado E. Maambong
☐	Nov. 20 a.m.	2/Trial & Pre-trial Skills 2/MCLE Prescribed: Environmental Law	Justice Ediberto G. Sandoval Justice Oswaldo Agcaoili
☐	Nov. 20 p.m.	3/Legal Ethics 2/International Law	Justice Jose L. Sabio, Jr. Prof. Harry H.L. Roque, Jr.
☐	Nov. 27 a.m.	2/Legal Writing 2/Updates in Civil & Criminal Procedure	Justice Hugo E. Gutierrez, Jr. Justice Hilarion L. Aquino
☐	Nov. 27 p.m.	3/Alternative Dispute Resolution 2/Updates in Remedial Law	Dean Custodio O. Parlade Justice Ricardo P. Galvez
☐	Dec. 04 a.m.	2/Alternative Dispute Resolution 2/Trial & Pre-trial Skills	Dean Froilan M. Bacungan Justice Hilarion L. Aquino
☐	Dec. 04 p.m.	3/Legal Ethics 2/MCLE Prescribed: Ballistics and Fingerprinting	Justice Ruben T. Reyes Justice Regalado E. Maambong

Name of Participant: _____ Roll No.: _____ IBP Chapter: _____
Address: _____
Tel. No.: _____ Fax No: _____ Firm Name: _____

Cut and fax to: (632) 844-3935 or 687-3106

Our Venue is at the **Aster Hotel**, a four-star hotel with ample parking space, conveniently located at the corner of Makati Avenue and Edsa Street, Makati City.
Attendees shall be provided with: meals (a.m./p.m. snacks & lunch), free-flowing coffee/tea, seminar (computer) bag, seminar kit, lecture materials, certificates of attendance.
For inquiries, please call: **DL: (632) 886-7868; TL: (632)844-3871; 844-3819; 844-3906**
Call or send SMS at: **09178574978 or 09178574988** Or log on to: www.legisforum.org & register online

Legis Forum, Inc. 8th Floor Chatham House, 116 Valero cor. Herrera Sts., Salcedo Village, Makati City

Port rivalry at heart of Smokey fight, says lawmaker

By Carlos Pabio

AN ADMINISTRATION congressman yesterday charged that business rivalry is at the heart of the revival of charges concerning the Smokey Mountain Development and Reclamation Project.

In a privilege speech, Rep. Edcel Lagman (Albay, 1st District) said that there is more than meets the eye to claims that the project undertaken by SM Builders of construction magnate Sergio Ramirez II was tainted with irregularities.

Zubiri noted that Ramirez also owns the Harbour Centre Port Terminal Inc. which operates how the P5-hectare project are which will since the former Smokey Mountain garbage dump.

Citing the adage that where there is smoke there is fire, Zubiri said that the smoke swirling around the Smokey Mountain project couldn't have been generated by the terms of the contract executed on 8 October in 1994.

"My misery investigators deemed that for remainder from the competitors Harbour Center provides the Philippine Ports Authority and its other port operators in Manila," Zubiri said.

Zubiri said that the privately-owned and operated Harbour Center has been violating local and with earlier established port operators, namely the International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) and the Asian Terminals Inc. (ATI).

The ICTSI is owned by the Razon-Ayala group, while ATI is operated by the Australia-based P&O Ports and local partner 7-8 Bot Services.

Zubiri said that the PPA gave Harbour Center the permit to handle all kinds of domestic inter-island foreign bulk and break-bulk cargo.

"But truth, the port now handles 60 percent of the bulk and break-bulk cargo coming into the Manila Ports due to greater efficiency and lower rates," Zubiri said.

Zubiri noted that Harbour Center offers service rates which are 131 percent lower than its competitors, indicating that the rates of ICTSI and ATI have been "grossly overpriced."

Zubiri also said that the PPA has not given Harbour Center a permit to handle foreign containerized cargo although the firm's application has been pending for a few years.

"Why? Of course, to protect the monopoly of ICTSI and ATI on the lucrative container traffic?" Zubiri claimed.

In his speech, Zubiri was careful not to mention the name of administration bet, Mikati Defensor Santiago.

On Aug. 10, Santiago delivered a privilege speech citing alleged irregularities in the Smokey Mountain contract executed by SM Builders by then President Fidel Ramos.

Zubiri merely said that two previous investigations in the Senate and House "gave the project clean bills of health," hence, the "many old issues are now being raised from the grave."

EXPIRED DRUGS CASE

Military doctor reinvestigated

By Alexis Romero

THE ARMED Forces chief has ordered the reinvestigation of a military doctor accused of ordering the use of expired medicines to treat soldiers.

AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu could be ordered the reinvestigation of Col. William Ye, former head of the Post Graduate Internal Medicine (PGIM), after meeting with Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. and four former employees of the hospital who filed the complaint.

"We promised them (four employees) that we will reinvestigate the case," Abu told reporters in a phone interview outside his office in Camp Aguinaldo.

"We are very concerned about the rank-and-file soldiers. I hope they support us," Myrna Duavit, one of the hospital employees, told reporters. The other employees are Vivian Pangilinan, Elena Sarmiento and Nora Mina.

AFP Public Information Office chief Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual said Abu had already ordered the AFP's Judge Advocate General's Office to conduct the investigation.

AFP Inspector General Maj. Gen. Edmundo Cabreros, who earlier conducted an investigation, defended his handling of Ye's case, saying his office had acted swiftly to resolve the matter. He said that in June, his office recommended the filing of graft charges against Ye before the Office of the Ombudsman. Ye's case was also referred to the Army's efficiency and Separation Board.

Cabreros said his office had found out that Ye misappropriated some P1.5 million in referral fees the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (Philhealth). He said Ye was also involved in the "ghost" purchases of medicines and narrow supplies worth P30,000 by using fake receipts. The investigation led to the relief of Ye as PGIM head.

Verification that this case has been referred to us and in June, I finished the investigation, but I don't know if they have had it taken into consideration?" Cabreros said.

The case stemmed from a phone call heard made to a local radio station search regarding that Ye ordered nurses in the hospital to use expired medicines in treating wounded soldiers.

Ye has denied the charges, saying he was ready to face investigation if he can.

Pascual had earlier said that since receiving reports on the use of expired medicines in the hospital, no soldier has died nor has the medical condition of any soldier worsened.

Plane loses tail cone on landing; no one injured

By Clarissa S. Beltro

A CEBU Air Pacific Airways commercial plane had its tail cone protruding as it landed on the Tacloban City airport, prompting the Air Transportation Office to call for an investigation of the fleet of the Cebu-based owned airline company.

Cebu Pacific officials dismissed yesterday's mishap as a minor incident. Its president, Lance Gokongwei, said losing a tail cone would not have been fatal to any of its 60 passengers and 4 crew members.

Cebu Pacific general manager Danilo Hipos said the passengers on board flight 5J 851 from Manila to Tacloban were not even aware that the tail cone had fallen off. The 26 -seater landed by the passenger ramp at the Tacloban airport and offloaded all passengers and crew.

A tail cone is the small detachable end. front part of the plane, which is purely used for aerodynamics and to improve fuel efficiency. It has nothing to do with plane stability, since this is Cebu Pacific.

The ATO said the "minimal tail end section of the fuselage located right under the vertical stabilizer detached and fell in the runway."

It added that the country's second-largest airline has continued to be suffering from the series of problems in take-offs and landings.

The ATO said on May 8, a Cebu Pacific plane had a problem with its steering and crashed on the runway the most part of the morning.

Stories said on June 2, an aircraft of the same carrier suffered a hydraulic leak in the Mactan Cebu airport. Two days before that, another plane of the Gokongwei carrier also had problems after landing on an engine oil near drenched.

ATO chief Wilv Jimez said that yesterday's event seemed to be isolated and indeed was only minor.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, November 9, 2004
Dedication of the Basilicas of St. John the Lateran

1st Reading: Ezk 47:1-2, 8-9, 12
2nd Reading: 1 Cor 3:9-11, 16-17
Gospel: Jn 2:13-22

At the Passover of the Jews any a feast, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the Temple court he found merchants selling oxen, sheep and doves, and money-changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the Temple court, together with the oxen and sheep. He knocked over the tables of the money-changers, scattering the coins, and ordered the people selling doves, "Take all this away and stop turning my Father's house into a marketplace!"

His disciples recalled the words of Scripture: Zeal for your House devours me as a fire.

The Jews then questioned Jesus, "Where are the miraculous signs which give you the right to do this?" And Jesus said, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews then replied, "The building of this temple has taken already forty-six years, and you will raise it up in three days?"

Actually, Jesus was referring to the temple of his body. Only when he had risen from the dead did his disciples remember these words; then they believed both the Scripture and the words Jesus had spoken.

Commentary

"St. John Lateran" is a church in Rome, not a person. In the words ourselves Jesus, it's the "mother of all churches." It was the site of Christian church building. The ground for it was donated by the Emperor Constantine early in the 4th century. It was rebuilt four or five times! The Basilica attacked is in the 5th century, an earthquake did the same in the 6th, was then destroyed in 10 different times in the 14th, and then was finally of the original when the interior was redone in the 17th. The statues that line the center are also so massive in size that we, the fallible human beings you walk there. How? It's the first connection I see between today's reading and the Lateran Basilica!

The intended connection probably was "I must step at your house today." A church is a meeting place, a gathering. And as a house is a symbol of the self. Thinks words, "We must go into our house, our souls... Whenever go into our house and look for God there, God in the same looks for us and reminds the house. He believes just as we do when we are searching for something, cleaning aside one thing after another until we find what we are looking for. This is just what He does to us. When we have gone into our house, when we have searched for Him in the depths of our souls, finds times and searches for us and reminds our house."

Claretian Publications, Inc., P Mayond St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, 1920) data 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City, M. 921-4000, Fax 921-7429. E-mail: pub@cmf.ph, Website: http://www.bible-church.org (Claretian Publications, Inc.) & http://claretian.net (Claretians in the Philippines)

WHY GRAFT IS PREVALENT

Ombudsman conviction rate only 6%, says solon

By Michael Lim Ubac

IF IT were a baseball team, the Office of the Ombudsman would be at the bottom of the standings.

That's because the office, which investigates and prosecutes cases of graft and corruption against government officials, has a batting average of only six percent.

This was revealed yesterday by Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan who said the might partly explain why the nation-corruption watchdog Transparency International for the second straight year rated the Philippines CON-scoring the 13th most corrupt countries in the world.

Pangilinan, a lawyer and former member of the Judicial and Bar Council, said the Ombudsman had consistently failed to curb corruption in government.

"The number of lawyers in the Office of the Ombudsman is just so considerably insignificant vis-a-vis the number of cases pending before it... Based on data submitted to the Senate committee on justice this year, the conviction rate [in] the Sandiganbayan is only six percent. This explains in part why corruption continues to prevail," he said.

But an official of another government graft-fighting agency hailed the numbers.

Commissioner Nicanor Conti of the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) said additional manpower and resources enabled the Ombudsman to raise the conviction rate of corrupt government officials from six percent to 20 percent in the last three years.

"Case buildup is very important in the conviction of a corrupt official," Conti said during a media briefing hosted by the United Nations Development Program in Makati City this week.

He said the President had given additional funds for the hiring of more personnel last year. He stressed, however, that the Ombudsman should be given more teeth in the fight against corruption.

Conti had also suggested that Congress enact a law that would allow the Ombudsman to hire private lawyers to help in the prosecution of cases and to climb the agency "with more powers."

Whether he was aware of the suggestion or not, Pangilinan has filed Senate Bill No. 1858, which seeks to amend Republic Act No. 6770 or the Ombudsman Act of 1989, to allow private lawyers to act as special prosecutors in certain cases.

"Sadly, our dwindling government coffers may constrain Ombudsman Marcelo's request [for additional funds]. The passage of the bill will authorize his office to hire top-caliber private lawyers to act as investigators and prosecutors to assist in the prosecution of cases pending," Pangilinan said. With Maryann C. Ortiz

CA stops order dismissing Pleyto

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE COURT of Appeals has stopped the Office of the Ombudsman from sacking Public Works Undersecretary Salvador Pleyto after he failed to declare P3.6.6 million worth of assets.

In a two-page resolution on Nov. 5, the court's 11th Division issued a 60-day temporary restraining order that stopped Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo from implementing a decision to dismiss Pleyto from government service.

The tribunal issued the TRO while it reviewed Pleyto's petition to overturn Marcelo's decision.

"Pending action on the application for preliminary injunction, we resolve to grant the plea for a temporary restraining order, on the ground that the petitioner may suffer grave or irreparable injury before the matter can be heard on notice," said the order penned by Associate Justice Rosmari Carandang III.

Marcelo ordered on June 28 Pleyto's dismissal from government service for grave misconduct and dishonesty after he failed to declare in his 2000 and 2002 Statement of Assets and Liabilities and Net Worth pieces of property valued at P36,000,042.20.

On Oct. 13, Marcelo denied Pleyto's motion for reconsideration.

The appellate court also ordered the Philippine National Police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, which filed the case against Pleyto, to comment within 10 days on his petition to overturn Marcelo's decision.

Couples say 2; actually, it's 4

By Blanche S. Rivera

DON with only three children, per couple, it would take at least another six years for the Philippines to achieve the targeted 1.9 percent population growth rate, distinguished not yet today.

The National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) was released by the government showed that the country's total fertility rate (TFR) or the number of children that couples actually have has not reduced by only 0.2 percent in the past five years.

Filipino couples say they want only two children but actually have three or four due to an unmet need for family planning. The total and wanted fertility rates have a gap of at least one child, according to the NDHS 2003.

With the 2003 TFR of 3.5 being ordered by 3 percent every five years, the country would have a population growth rate of 1.9 percent between 2010 and 2015.

"If we maintain the decline, population will stop growing only after 90 years, in the Philippines already has produced the replacement population for its current human resources," demographer and Commission on Population board member Mercedes Concepcion said yesterday during the data dissemination of the NDHS at Makati City.

The NDHS, conducted by the National Statistics Office every five years, was presented for the first time as national and local government officials. The last NDHS was done in 1998.

The 2003 survey confirmed that unmet family planning is higher among the poor, who have less exposure to ways of limiting the number of their children or spacing children's births.

The study also found that fertility in the Philippines has declined steadily over the past 30 years, reported by those that said 1.07in and 1980s with a decline of one birth every decade observed.

Nevertheless, the reduction in TFN was not fast enough. "The Philippines has a population of 84 million, which is expected to balloon to 104.6 million by 2030.

"The poor have higher fertility lower contraceptive prevalence rate and higher unmet needs. We need to reemphasize use of the whole methodology to empower the poor, nothing is being done," Concepcion said.

Now, DepEd welcomes faultfinders

Dona Z. Pazzibugan

DEB is one for the books.

After initially shutting systems schools's member's claim that a certain history textbook is riddled with errors, education sec. Jesli Lapus welcomed the findings.

Education Secretary Florentino Abad said these academic shortcomings during the review of contents for the quality of textbooks cited by public school students.

"We're grateful because these experts are volunteering their time and they're doing it out of altruism," Abad said during a press conference at The Medallion Restaurant yesterday.

Undersecretary for Hidalgo, who is in charge of the review of all public school textbooks, said they would be re-evaluating 40 out of the about 100 textbooks during a workshop from Nov. 9 to 11.

"They're basically looking into errors, factual, grammatical errors, or anything that has to do with language either in English and Filipino," Hidalgo said.

Abad ordered the re-evaluation after a number of historians confirmed that there's at least one textbook in public schools. Education supervisor Antonio Calipo Go was correct in saying that the second year high school textbook "Saya Noon, Ngayon at sa Hinaharap" was riddled with errors.

Military, Moro rebels swap raps of truce violations after clashes

GOVERNMENT forces and Muslim rebels exchanged charges of violations Tuesday after some of the worst fighting this year in central Mindanao killed several people and displaced around 11,000.

The military said seven rebels from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) were killed in fighting last week between the separatist group and army-backed militia forces that forced many residents to flee their homes.

The MILF denied any of its members died and said it had killed three militiamen.

Brig. Gen. Alexander Yano, head of the government's truce panel, said the fighting in four villages in Maguindanao town last week was triggered by a personal misdemeanor between feuding families.

He said the army might file a formal complaint against the MILF for violating a 13-month-old ceasefire by massing troops and attacking farming villages.

But MILF spokesman Eid Kabalu said government soldiers the military opposed to the peace talks might be exploding long-standing clan wars among Muslims to provoke fresh fighting between rebels and soldiers.

"The MILF is worried about the situation," he said. "The people there are still afraid because of continued army presence in the Muslim communities." Reuters

CURE BAD BREATH NOW
Call: 0915-6308301
0917-8511045

ORIGINAL CARWASH EQUIPMENT
NOW Php39,500
Previously Priced @ P58,000
CLEANCITY COMMERCIAL INCORPORATED

Permanent Make-Up And much More...
BEFORE
AFTER
Asia's No.1
FREE CONSULTATION
Pretty Looks

Nayan's family appeals to captors to free him

Continued from A1

hopelessness to [illegible] hearts" and free him.

Bamidis made the appeal during an interview with Arab satellite station Al-Jazeera as its anchor in Doha, Qatar.

Tauregup has been held hostage since Nov. 1 when still unidentified gunmen stormed the compound of Saudi Trading and Constructing Co. (Satco) in Baghdad and seized the 30 Satco employees. Al-Jazeera, a Kuwaiti and three Iraqis. The Kuwaiti and two of the Iraqis have since been freed.

Nayan, Atanacio Flangaya of Northern Ireland, and Shaipe Ba'dah of Kuwait were abducted 72 days ago when armed men barked their marked UN vehicle in downtown Kabul on Oct. 28.

Court said the Philippines had no intention of interfering in Afghanistan's political affairs.

'God never sleeps'

"The Filipino people took nothing but the best for the people of Afghanistan. We have never been involved in your internal conflicts. In fact, our government does not even have an embassy or consulate in your country," she said.

Court also called on some sectors of society "to please refrain from using my brother's abduction to advance your cause." She did not specify who she was referring to.

She said that while they had to go through an "agonizing wait," they were hopeful that Angelito would eventually be freed.

"Our family believes in the saying that 'Time, too, shall pass,' that God never sleeps, that He will find a way for us to be reunited with Angelito," she said.

Prisoner swap

The group holding Nayan, calling itself the Army of Muslims, had threatened to kill the hostages but extended the deadline at least twice to open negotiations with Afghan and UN officials.

They met with Afghan officials Monday and gave them a list of 26 prisoners they wanted to swap for the hostages. Further talks are due Tuesday.

In Kabul, officials expressed optimism they would be able to obtain the freedom of the three UN workers held by a splinter group of the Taliban.

Afghan officials said government negotiators searching for the three had yet to receive a list of prisoners that the militants want released in return for the hostages' lives.

The officials didn't rule out that a handful of ministers and top aides were negotiating in secret.

Bahrain ready to help

Before speaking on Al-Jazeera, Bamidis met in Manama with Bahrain Prime Minister Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa, who promised to do all he could to persuade Tauregup's still unidentified Iraqi captors to release the 30 year-old Filipino.

The prime minister said that Bahrain was always ready to help in such situations and that he would personally start every effort to secure the release of Robert Tauregup," Bamidis said in a statement.

Bahrain was among the Middle East countries which played a quiet role in securing the release of Filipino truck driver Angelo de la Cruz from his Iraqi abductors in July.

De la Cruz was freed after the Philippines acceded to the captors' demands and withdrew its military contingent from Iraq.

"I call for the release of Robert Tauregup on compassionate and a Filipino. But he is returned to his home and his loved ones very soon," Bamidis said in his remarks translated into Arabic.

Time for forgiveness

"At this time of Ramadan, when we find in our hearts the value of life, and we can find forgiveness in our hearts ... we appeal for the release of Robert Tauregup," he said.

Al-Jazeera reported Friday that Tauregup had been freed but later recaptured.

A Philippine diplomat in Iraq, Eric Endaya, has been in talks with various contacts, including Tauregup's employers, in a bid to locate the captive.

Bamidis said his country was urging its citizens not to travel to Iraq, where 4,000 Filipinos work in 128 military camps, mostly as maintenance workers and cooks. Some 1,000 Filipinos have entered Iraq since a ban on travel to the Arab country was imposed following De la Cruz's release.

Anxiety in Davao

In Tauregup's hometown of Davao City, anxiety was all over the house of Dolias Tauregup and his wife Isabelita as the fate of their son remained uncertain.

"They (the abductors) should have given a statement by now. At least we would know his condition and if indeed he was abducted," Tomas said in the vernacular. "We appeal to the Brain that They Live Believe."

Isabelita, 56, said her son "knows Muslims" and would ease fear to show his respect for the Islamic practices.

Government officials have been paying the Tauregup clan visits, trying to assure them that their son would be released.

"Not when?" Isabelita asked.

Isabelita said Robert, before his abduction, frequently called them to say that he was doing well and was safe.

Tauregup's routine

"We keep on telling him not to roam around," she said.

She said he not told his last daily routine save "office to mall house."

Since the abduction, she said she had not eaten a decent meal.

Jennifer Cato, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) director for Southern Mindanao, said Tauregup's parents responded positively during psychological sessions conducted yesterday.

They had great faith in God and were optimistic their son would be released, Cato said.

Spokesperson for the Arab al-Mukhtarun, or the Army of Muslims, which is holding Nayan's group, said on Sunday that they had handed a list of 26 prisoners, some possibly in US custody at Guantanamo Bay, to government negotiators.

But two government officials told The Associated Press on Monday that they had found no any contact with the kidnappers and had not received any such list.

Ishaq Mansour, one of several men claiming to speak for the kidnappers, told AP that a government delegation had asked for two days to find out whether the prisoners whom the group wanted freed were in Afghanistan or elsewhere.

Mansour didn't identify any of the prisoners the group wanted released, but the group had said previously that some of them may be in US custody in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, or at US and Afghan jails in Afghanistan.

It had also demanded that the United Nations and British withdraw troops withdraw from Afghanistan.

The militants have said that the three hostages are suffering from cold and a diet of cookies, but offered no evidence of their condition.

The Ragtag Afghanistan Mujahadeen Army to withdraw support from the US occupation of Iraq.

"The Arroyo government yesterday became Tauregup by declaring the government's withdrawal of support on the US occupation in Iraq and by implication, paving a green light for the continued deployment of Filipino workers in Iraq," the statement said in a statement. With reports from Inquirer wires, Agencies Bernadette in Manila, and Dennis Arc C. Santos and Anthony C. Alfado, PDI Mindanao Bureau

POEA probes captive's 'illegal deployment'

By Jerome Aning

THE PHILIPPINE Overseas and Employment Administration has begun a formal investigation of unionized Robert Tauregup's "illegal deployment" in Iraq and forced its termination in his supposed overseas Contracting and Construction Co. (Satco) in Baghdad and seized the 30 Satco employees. Al-Jazeera, a Kuwaiti and three Iraqis. The Kuwaiti and two of the Iraqis have since been freed.

Nayan, Atanacio Flangaya of Northern Ireland, and Shaipe Ba'dah of Kuwait were abducted 72 days ago when armed men barked their marked UN vehicle in downtown Kabul on Oct. 28.

Court said the Philippines had no intention of interfering in Afghanistan's political affairs.

'God never sleeps'

"The Filipino people took nothing but the best for the people of Afghanistan. We have never been involved in your internal conflicts. In fact, our government does not even have an embassy or consulate in your country," she said.

Court also called on some sectors of society "to please refrain from using my brother's abduction to advance your cause." She did not specify who she was referring to.

She said that while they had to go through an "agonizing wait," they were hopeful that Angelito would eventually be freed.

"Our family believes in the saying that 'Time, too, shall pass,' that God never sleeps, that He will find a way for us to be reunited with Angelito," she said.

Prisoner swap

The group holding Nayan, calling itself the Army of Muslims, had threatened to kill the hostages but extended the deadline at least twice to open negotiations with Afghan and UN officials.

They met with Afghan officials Monday and gave them a list of 26 prisoners they wanted to swap for the hostages. Further talks are due Tuesday.

In Kabul, officials expressed optimism they would be able to obtain the freedom of the three UN workers held by a splinter group of the Taliban.

Afghan officials said government negotiators searching for the three had yet to receive a list of prisoners that the militants want released in return for the hostages' lives.

The officials didn't rule out that a handful of ministers and top aides were negotiating in secret.

Bahrain ready to help

Before speaking on Al-Jazeera, Bamidis met in Manama with Bahrain Prime Minister Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa, who promised to do all he could to persuade Tauregup's still unidentified Iraqi captors to release the 30 year-old Filipino.

"The prime minister said that Bahrain was always ready to help in such situations and that he would personally start every effort to secure the release of Robert Tauregup," Bamidis said in a statement.

Bahrain was among the Middle East countries which played a quiet role in securing the release of Filipino truck driver Angelo de la Cruz from his Iraqi abductors in July.

De la Cruz was freed after the Philippines acceded to the captors' demands and withdrew its military contingent from Iraq.

"I call for the release of Robert Tauregup on compassionate and a Filipino. But he is returned to his home and his loved ones very soon," Bamidis said in his remarks translated into Arabic.

Time for forgiveness

"At this time of Ramadan, when we find in our hearts the value of life, and we can find forgiveness in our hearts ... we appeal for the release of Robert Tauregup," he said.

Al-Jazeera reported Friday that Tauregup had been freed but later recaptured.

A Philippine diplomat in Iraq, Eric Endaya, has been in talks with various contacts, including Tauregup's employers, in a bid to locate the captive.

Bamidis said his country was urging its citizens not to travel to Iraq, where 4,000 Filipinos work in 128 military camps, mostly as maintenance workers and cooks. Some 1,000 Filipinos have entered Iraq since a ban on travel to the Arab country was imposed following De la Cruz's release.

Anxiety in Davao

In Tauregup's hometown of Davao City, anxiety was all over the house of Dolias Tauregup and his wife Isabelita as the fate of their son remained uncertain.

"They (the abductors) should have given a statement by now. At least we would know his condition and if indeed he was abducted," Tomas said in the vernacular. "We appeal to the Brain that They Live Believe."

Isabelita, 56, said her son "knows Muslims" and would ease fear to show his respect for the Islamic practices.

Government officials have been paying the Tauregup clan visits, trying to assure them that their son would be released.

"Not when?" Isabelita asked.

Isabelita said Robert, before his abduction, frequently called them to say that he was doing well and was safe.

Tauregup's routine

"We keep on telling him not to roam around," she said.

She said he not told his last daily routine save "office to mall house."

Since the abduction, she said she had not eaten a decent meal.

Jennifer Cato, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) director for Southern Mindanao, said Tauregup's parents responded positively during psychological sessions conducted yesterday.

They had great faith in God and were optimistic their son would be released, Cato said.

Spokesperson for the Arab al-Mukhtarun, or the Army of Muslims, which is holding Nayan's group, said on Sunday that they had handed a list of 26 prisoners, some possibly in US custody at Guantanamo Bay, to government negotiators.

But two government officials told The Associated Press on Monday that they had found no any contact with the kidnappers and had not received any such list.

Ishaq Mansour, one of several men claiming to speak for the kidnappers, told AP that a government delegation had asked for two days to find out whether the prisoners whom the group wanted freed were in Afghanistan or elsewhere.

Mansour didn't identify any of the prisoners the group wanted released, but the group had said previously that some of them may be in US custody in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, or at US and Afghan jails in Afghanistan.

It had also demanded that the United Nations and British withdraw troops withdraw from Afghanistan.

The militants have said that the three hostages are suffering from cold and a diet of cookies, but offered no evidence of their condition.

The Ragtag Afghanistan Mujahadeen Army to withdraw support from the US occupation of Iraq.

"The Arroyo government yesterday became Tauregup by declaring the government's withdrawal of support on the US occupation in Iraq and by implication, paving a green light for the continued deployment of Filipino workers in Iraq," the statement said in a statement. With reports from Inquirer wires, Agencies Bernadette in Manila, and Dennis Arc C. Santos and Anthony C. Alfado, PDI Mindanao Bureau

24/7 COMMUNICATION AT NO EXTRA COST!

STANDALONE AUTO-ATTENDANT & VOICE MAIL SYSTEM

- No more unanswered calls!
- Improve response to your customer needs!
- Increase in customer service & satisfaction!
- Competitive to any brand of hybrid pabx!

Features
- Consist of 2 ports & 4 ports
- Directory assistance up to 11 sub menu levels
- Different greetings for day, noon, night & holiday
- Supports up to 2 mailboxes (for Auto-Attendant) & 128 mailboxes (for Voice Mail System)
- Personal greetings for each mailbox
- Easy or No answer detection

Comlinx, Incorporated
For more inquiries, please call
341-0963 / 340-0178 / 340-4804 / 340-4807 loc 1000
E-mail: comlinx@pcx.net.ph

US military begins assault of Fallujah

Continued from A1

An AC-130 gunship raked the city all night long with cannon fire, and and before dawn, four 225-lb bombs were dropped, causing orange fireballs over the city's outskirts.

Commanders said the toughest fighting was yet to come when troops can move once to the east bank of the Euphrates and enter the main part of Fallujah—including the Jolan neighborhood where insurgent defenses are believed the strongest.

In the first heavy action this time in to Fallujah proper, Marines entered an apartment building to the northwestern corner of the city by noon, said Capt. Brian Hawthorne of the 3rd Battalion 1st Marine Regiment.

"The Marines have now gained a foothold in the city," said Hawthorne.

He said there were some fruitless attacks as the troops exited the building, where Marines found an improvised bomb hanging above a doorway—one of the many booby traps set by troops they expect to come across in the urban battle.

Marine commanders have warned the offensive against Fallujah could bring the heaviest urban fighting since the Vietnam war. Some 10,000 US Marines, army soldiers and Iraqi forces are around Fallujah, which commanders estimate around 5,000 insurgents are dug in. More than half the civilian population of some 300,000 people is believed to have fled already.

US and Iraqi commanders have vowed to stamp out Sunni Muslim guerrillas controlling Fallujah and other cities north and west of Baghdad ahead of vital January elections.

Allawi said that insurgent resistance would be imposed on Fallujah and Ramadi, another insurgent stronghold nearby, beginning at 8 p.m. (1600GMT). Roads and power, water facilities in the two cities will be closed, all weapons will be banned, Iraq's borders with Syria and Jordan will be closed and Baghdad's international airport will be shut down for 48 hours.

Allawi's government announced on Sunday that it was imposing a 60-day state of emergency across Iraq—except for the Kurdish controlled north.

The US military reported its first casualties of the offensive—two Marines killed when their Humvee flipped over into the Euphrates. Two troops were killed and 11 others in separate attacks on Monday.

Sunni provinces covering Iraq's dry and other services to the United States-led coalition forces in Iraq.

The POEA said it had found that Tauregup had applied with Satco through its contractor as early as April 14. His application was filed at the agency's branch office in Davao City.

Tauregup's wife Grace said he left Mindanao on June 28 to fly for up on the assignment.

Jil Constancio informed the POEA that Tauregup was able to leave for Iraq through Qatar on July 20. The Department of Foreign Affairs said Tauregup arrived in Iraq on July 26.

The POEA has no record of

A TV image shows a US soldier blindfolding a man after an attack on a hospital in Fallujah.

passed during the overnight barrage in Fallujah, according to doctors.

Clinics in Fallujah denounced Iraqi troops participating in the assault, calling them the "occupiers' tools on their fellow countrymen."

"We swear by God that we will stand against you in the streets, we will carry your bodies and we will slaughter you just like sheep," the clinics said in a statement.

The US military said insurgents had been in control of Fallujah General Hospital—located on the west bank of the Euphrates—and were "barring the doctors there to release propaganda and false information."

It underlined in a statement that when hospitals "are used for military purposes they lose ... protected status."

"While US forces undertook all the steps Iraqi troops moved into the hospital—capturing four foreigners and killing 38 persons," Allawi said.

Two of those captured were Moroccans, he said, adding, "We do not know whether those killed are Iraqis or not. They were stationed in the hospital in order to carry out terrorist actions."

Kills like crushing inflicted through the building as the Iraqi troops used special tools, powered by .22-cal. blanks, to break open doors locks.

During the siege of Fallujah last April, doctors at the hospital were a main source of reports about civilian casualties, which were reported in the hundreds. Those reports generated strong public outrage in Iraq and elsewhere in the Arab world, prompting the Bush administration to call off the offensive. US officials insisted the numbers were overblown.

Hospital director Dr. Saifful Anwar said Monday he asked US officers to allow doctors and ambulances go inside the main part of the city to help the wounded. But they refused. "There was no confirmation from the Americans.

Al-Anwar denounced the US attacks. The terrorists "thought that they would halt medical assistants to the resistance," he said by telephone to a reporter outside the city. "But they did not realize that the hospital does not belong to anybody, especially the resistance."

The offensive, launched after midnight, came after government negotiators reported the failure of last minute peace talks. Allawi said Monday that "terrorists" in the city were not willing to make peace.

"We have no other option but to take the necessary measures to protect Iraqi people from minority Sunni community in areas of all-out assault.

On Monday, the Association of Muslim Scholars, a multifaceted Sunni clerics group, condemned the assault on Fallujah. The group has threatened to boycott elections.

"The attack on Fallujah is an illegal and illegitimate action against civilians and innocent people. We denounce this operation which will have a grave consequences on the situation in Iraq," spokesperson Mohammed Bashar al-Faidhi.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and others have warned that a military offensive could trigger a wave of violence that would endanger the January elections by alienating Sunnis, who form the core of the insurgency. About 60 percent of Iraq's 25 million people are Shiite.

Over the weekend, insurgents launched a wave of attacks in central Iraq in an apparent attempt to divert attention away from Fallujah. About 60 people were killed—including two American soldiers—and 71 injured.

AP

Meralco rates up anew

From page A1

...ide/Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira).

All rate-recovery charges and pass-through costs have to be approved by the ERC before implementation.

The ERC in September granted Napocor an average generation rate increase of 99 centavos per kWh to help reduce its losses.

Because of cross-subsidies, consumers in Luzon will shoulder the biggest increase among the regions. The corresponding increase for the Luzon grid was placed at P1.22 per kWh; for the Visayas grid, 22.43 centavos; and for the Mindanao grid, 20.16 centavos.

The approval of the new rates raised Napocor's Luzon generation charge by 46 percent to P3.62 from P2.57 per kWh, the Visayas charge by 7.8 percent to P3.04 from P2.82 per kWh, and the Mindanao rate by 15 percent to P2.87 from P1.99 per kWh.

With its entire franchise area located within the Luzon grid, Meralco customers would have to bear the biggest pass-on charge as compared to power users in the two other main grids.

But since Meralco gets only 85 percent of its power requirements from Napocor, consumers of the distribution utility will not have to bear the full P1.23 per-kWh Napocor generation rate hike.

Also starting this month, the generation charge and system loss charge will be adjusted monthly instead of quarterly as a result of the ERC's recent approval of a set of guidelines governing the recovery of such costs from end-users.

This shift would address the delays in cost recovery that Meralco had to bear during the past months that the front was in place, said Dpi Cuna, Meralco vice president for corporate communication.

Instead of reflecting generation rate fluctuations in its monthly bills four to five months after the added costs were incurred, the new guidelines would result in the automatic monthly adjustment scheme, similar to the much-condemned purchased power adjustment (PPA), that would allow a more immediate reflection of cost fluctuations.

"Consumers are assured that they are paying for the updated cost of electricity since any change in the generation rate will immediately be reflected in their bill," Meralco said in a statement.

"They will be able to easily track, on a monthly basis, the changes in rate items pertaining to generation such as fuel, Interim Mirant and IPP rates," it said. "Moreover, customers are guaranteed from paying carrying costs, effectively freezing the generation-rate components of their bill."

For now, the partial lifting of the rate subsidy will not affect customers enjoying lifeline rate discounts, or those using 100 kWh or less of electricity per month.

They will continue to enjoy lower rates for a period of 10 years from the implementation of the Epira.

But means that, even with the removal of inter-class cross-subsidies for Meralco consumers, residential users consuming not more than 50 kWh a month will continue receiving a 50-percent discount.

Those using 51 to 70 kWh a month will still be given a 35-percent discount and those consuming 71 to 100 kWh will continue receiving a 20-percent discount.

The impact of the increase in Napocor's generation rates on those customers' monthly bills will, therefore, also be cushioned.

Meralco said it would not be earning anything from the resulting rate increases as these were due to an increase in the Napocor generation charge and the removal of cross-subsidies.

Consumers are not happy with the series of power rate increases. Militant groups are launching a nationwide power-off and noise barrage on Nov. 10 to take the level of protest over the soaring power rates. The Freedom from Debt Coalition, Alternative and the Kapatirang Alliance will lead the protest.

Hundreds of women from the three groups marched on the house of Representative yesterday to call on legislators to look into the impact of the high power rates on women.

IN THE KNOW

Anatomy of a price hike

THE LATEST price increase in your electricity bill is partly caused by what is called the generation rate adjustment (GRAM). This is actually the name in the much-hated purchased power adjustment (PPA) but given a new name when the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) approved last year the unbundling of rates.

The GRAM is a way for power distributors, such as Meralco, to recover from their customers the generation costs charged to them by their power suppliers, such as National Power Corp., Quezon Power Philippines Ltd. and other independent power producers (IPPs) like First Gas Power Corp., a Meralco sister firm.

Unlike the PPA, which was adjusted automatically to reflect fluctuations, Meralco must first seek ERC approval before it could pass on the additional costs to their customers.

The GRAM covers a three-month period, unlike the PPA, which changed every month.

The latest GRAM adjustment will reflect the increase in the cost of Napocor, which was granted in September its average hike of 99 centavos per kWh.

Another reason for the rate increase is the recent removal of 85 percent of subsidies for small consumers as mandated by the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001. PDI Research

The LEE KUAN YEW School of Public Policy.

The name stands for good government.

The degree stands for excellence.

The Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy invites scholarship applications for its Masters programme in Singapore.

The scholarship will cover tuition, allowance and a stipend throughout the duration of the 18-month academic period, commencing 1 July 2005.

Applicants need to have a recognised first degree and a minimum of two years working experience. To obtain a copy of our brochure and application booklet, visit www.spp.nus.edu.sg. Or direct enquiries to spplse@nus.edu.sg. Alternatively, you can call (+65) 6874 6104 or fax (+65) 6778 1626.

Applications must reach us by 15 January 2005.

NUS National University of Singapore

GUYITO WILD HUNT

REWARDS

The wild chase is on for Inquirer's Guyito!

Look for the specially-marked Guyito entry form on the pages of Inquirer. Cut out, put your name, address and signature. Drop at designated drop boxes for a shot at your most wanted rewards!

Join the fun as Inquirer celebrates 19 exciting years of giving Filipinos no less than balanced news and fearless views. Hunt them September 27 to December 14, 2004!

Prizes: (One winner per item) Grand Prize: Toyota Vios 1.5 G MT

MONTHLY DRAW

Second Draw: (Pick 6 from 42) • Prize: P500,000 • Three (3) winners

November Draw: 20 GB iPod • HP Ipaq Pocket PC • Olympus IS-U400 • Fujifilm Digital Camera • Panasonic DVD • Panasonic Home Theater • Canon S-Digital Business Kit • Motorola V3 • Nokia 6610 • Sony Ericsson T610 • Panasonic DVD • Palm One i5 • Epson CX5200 Printer • Canon iP3 Digipoint

PROMO RESOURCES:

a) Each copy of the Philippine Daily Inquirer will contain a specially-marked coupon featuring Guyito. The designated Inquirer outlets will obtain a set of the coupons. The Guyito Cards will appear in the PDI daily from September 27 to December 14, 2004.

b) Participants can then cut out the Guyito coupon, write down legibly his/her name, address, contact number and affix signature on the blanks provided, and send to Philippine Daily Inquirer offices or drop in drop boxes. Only original Guyito coupons will be considered; entries with photo copies of Guyito coupons will be disqualified. Original coupons are marked with the Guyito head insert printed right.

c) Only one Guyito coupon will be honored to each household from Monday to Saturday. There will be two Guyito coupons featured in Inquirer every Monday.

d) There are two ways to claim prizes:
1. Walk-in:
- Guyito Wild Hunt, Inquirer 19th Anniversary Promo Booth, Ayala Triangle Gardens, Ayala Avenue, Makati City
- Inquirer Main Office, 388 Sheridan Street, Mandaluyong City
2. Drop in drop boxes located at the following Inquirer Marketing Representatives (all branches):
Quezon Province
Alabang 1 / Alabang Lobby
Alabang 2 / Commerce Lobby
Greenhills 1 / Cinema Lobby
Greenhills 2 / Cinema 1 Lobby
Greenhills 3 / Cinema 2 Lobby
Greenhills 4 / Cinema 3 Lobby
Greenhills 5 / Cinema 4 Lobby
Greenhills 6 / Cinema 5 Lobby
Greenhills 7 / Cinema 6 Lobby
Greenhills

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Rosica

Global warming thawing Arctic fast

Melting threatening livelihood of millions, polar bear extinction

OSLO—Global warming is heating the Arctic almost twice as fast as the rest of the planet in a thaw that threatens the livelihoods of millions of people and could wipe out polar bears by 2100, an eight-nation report said on Monday.

The biggest survey to date of the Arctic climate, by 300 scientists, said the accelerating melt would be a bonanza of easier shipping routes from a buildup of human emissions of heat-trapping gases in the earth's atmosphere.

The "Arctic climate is now warming rapidly and much larger changes are projected," summarizing on the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA). Backed by the United States, Canada, Russia, Denmark, Iceland, Sweden, Norway and Finland.

Arctic temperatures are rising at almost twice the global average and could leap 4.7 Celsius by 2100, roughly twice the global average projected by UN experts.

Alaska and Alaska have already warmed by 2.5°C since the 1950s.

Possible benefits like more productive fisheries, easier access to oil and gas deposits or ice-free Arctic shipping routes would be outweighed by threats to indigenous peoples and the habitats of animals and plants.

Sea ice around the North Pole, for instance, would almost disappear in summer by the end of this century, it said. The extent of the ice has already shrunk by 10-20 percent in the past 30 years.

"Polar bears are unlikely to survive as a species if there is an almost complete loss of summer sea-ice cover," the report said. Several, creatures like lemmings, caribou, reindeer or snowy owls are being forced north into a narrower range.

The report mainly blames the melt on gases from fossil fuels burnt in cars, factories and power plants. The Arctic winter fades from the global average because of land, ocean and snow reflects sunlight and warm air is trapped, traps more heat than it loses, scientists said.

"Changes in the Arctic provide an early confirmation of the environmental and societal significance of global warming," it said. Reuters

SUSAN RUSSO

Lieutenants trying to bury Arafat alive, says wife

RAMALLAH, West Bank—Palestinian leader Arafat's ailing wife Suha accused his lieutenants of trying to bury him alive and of plotting a dismissing power struggle into the open.

The surrender Palestinian leadership in the West Bank has made great efforts to present a public image of unity since Arafat was flown to a French hospital last week for medical treatment. But in recent days, signs of divisions between the West Bank leaders and Israel have grown, while in exile fears began to emerge.

The current caretakers, Prime Minister Ahmed Qurei and Interior Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas, were scheduled to travel to France on Monday. But early in the day, Arafat's wife, Suha, announced the news of coming to Paris to ease Arafat.

"We have to endure the sins of the conspirators. I will pray they are trying to bury him [Arafat] alive," she told al-Jazeera television, using Arafat's nom de guerre. It was her first public comments since Arafat was hospitalized.

Farah Abdel Rahim, a senior Arafat aide, said the trip by the West Bank leaders was called off to prevent her comments. "They are angry with Suha and don't want to go," he said of a series conference in Ramallah.

"Of course from here it doesn't represent our people," he said, accusing Mrs. Arafat of "wanting to destroy the Palestinian leadership's decision and to be the lone decision-maker." It was unclear when the trip would be rescheduled.

Palestinian Cabinet minister Saeb Erekat said the Cabinet and PLO leadership would meet later Monday. "We hope to put this crisis behind us," he said.

With Arafat clinging to life, Mrs. Arafat has been one of a handful of people to see her husband, who reportedly remains in a coma in critical condition. Palestinian officials have grumbled that Mrs. Arafat, who has spent the past three years living in France, has gained too much power.

"It's an abuse of justice that Suha is sitting there and deciding orders, hour and order," Nasser Abu Arafat, a Palestinian Authority official, told Israel's Army Radio.

The decision to send the delegation came after Mohammed Dahlan, a former Gaza security chief who accompanied Arafat to France last week, returned to the West Bank with a message from Arafat's inner circle.

During Dahlan's absence, the caretaker leadership has presented a show of unity, holding numerous meetings with rival security chief and Islamic opposition groups. The rift with Mrs. Arafat was the first public sign of division.

One of the events that may have sparked Monday's confrontation was the arrival of PLO hard-liner Farouk Kaddoumi in the earlier this week.

Kaddoumi, who had long remained in the background and refused to leave exile in Tunisia even after Arafat returned to the West Bank a decade ago, has been produced in several days by some of Arafat's old guard as a possible successor in place of Abbas and Qurei. Their trip to Paris was widely seen as a response to the challenge. AP

Bomb attack jars Muslim school in Dutch town

THE HAGUE, Netherlands—An explosion blew the door off a Muslim school in a southern Dutch town and shattered windows across the street on Monday, Dutch television reported. There were no reports of injuries.

Pictures showed the burnt-out entrance of the school's school was empty at the time of the attack at around 5:30 a.m.

Police suspected it was related to the murder last week of Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh by a suspected Islamic radical, the report said.

Van Gogh's killing sparked a series of attacks over the weekend, including two arsonists to burn down mosques.

Eight suspected violent extremists have been arrested in connection with Tuesday's slaying of Theo van Gogh, who earlier this year released a film criticized how women are treated under Islam. Among those arrested was a 26-year-old suspected of killing the filmmaker, the suspect was identified only as Mohammed B.

Although mainstream Muslim groups condemned the killing, it has caused an outpouring of anger in the Netherlands.

Arsonists threw red paint Saturday night on a center in Amsterdam for ex-immigrants, many of them Muslim. The agency called the Oosterpoort center is located several blocks from the spot where Van Gogh was killed, and its director, Aboubakr Jamaleddin, told local television station dCT that he believed the vandals were racists. AP

FOR BENEVOLENT CREMATION

A workman sprays memorial flowers with water to keep them fresh around a pile of skulls of 10,150 unidentified dead people in Nonsi Sukhoo province, near Bangkok, Thailand, Mon. 8. A Buddhist benevolent society, Poh Teck Tung, every five years collects the bones of unclaimed bodies to give them a memorial cremation. AP

France deploys more troops in tense Ivory Coast

ABIDJAN—Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo appealed for calm late Sunday after two days of looting and violence against French nationals as France deployed reinforcements following the deaths of nine French troops in an air strike.

French retaliation said the situation was tense but under control and there were no immediate plans to evacuate their 14,000 nationals from the west African country despite anti-violence targeting foreigners, including the looting and torching of businesses and homes.

In a television address Gbagbo said: "I urge once again the people to be calm and I ask all demonstrators to return home," adding: "You must especially not give in to provocation."

Paris, backed by the European Union and Mission Unies, "emphasized" its unanswered Gbagbo after his party-run radio broadcasts set into the streets in defiance of French forces.

France also moved to quell speculation, fired by Gbagbo ruling Ivorian Popular Front (FPI), that its decision to send in an additional 700 troops was an attempt to destabilize the former French colony.

"We want only to preserve conditions of liquidity and to secure the country. Nothing else. To secure it, not to destabilize it," said Foreign Minister Michel Barnier.

An Ivorian government air earlier on Saturday killed nine French troops and a U.S. civilian in the semi-divided stronghold of Bouake.

The attack was "deliberate," Barnier said Monday.

In an immediate riposte, French President Jacques Chirac ordered the destruction of Ivory Coast jets in the capital Yamoussoukro as well as at least three attack helicopters, effectively eliminating the Ivorian air force.

Clinics and the planes had been violating the country's ceasefire in violence the rebel-held north.

Sunday's deployment of additional French troops followed a night of fierce clashes between the Ivorian military and thousands of Gbagbo partisans advancing on Abidjan's international airport to arrest it from French hands.

At least three people were killed in the clashes, which provoked French helicopters to firing 20 tear canisters, according to eyewitnesses. The French military has vigorously denied claims from the Gbagbo government that 30 people were shot dead. AFP

Strong quake strikes northern Japan

A WOMAN holds a young child at a nursery school in Otaruma, northern Japan as they escape outdoors following a strong earthquake with a magnitude of 5.9 which jolted the area, Mon. 8. REUTERS

TOKYO—A magnitude-5.9 earthquake rocked northern Japan on Monday near the area where the country's deadliest earthquake in a decade struck last month, 36 injuring eight people more seriously.

The quake, which hit at 11:16 a.m., was centered close to the earthly nuclear in the Chuetsu area of Niigata prefecture (state), the Meteorological Agency said.

The epicenter of the fairly-speed "bullet" train line between Tokyo and Niigata suspended services to conduct safety checks. One train derailed but month when the initial quake struck almost directly under its tracks.

Television footage from Niigata showed emergency personnel helping a man from a wooden memory of magnitudes 6.7 and 6.2 attack in rapid succession in the 30 minutes following the initial aftershock, the Meteorological Agency said.

There was no danger of tsunami, or vacuum waves triggered by seismic activity, it said.

A man in Ojiya was injured after he was briefly buried by a small landslide, said Atsushi Moriyama, a spokesperson for Niigata prefecture. Her kindergarten students and their teacher were lost in a nearby town when a wall they were walking past collapsed, and a woman was injured after she lost control of her motorbike, he said.

Takeshi Mitsuyasu, an official at the town hall in Nakasaitoba, among several towns where the quake shook strongest, said he felt 10 seconds of several rocking. He said it felt stronger than other aftershocks, but there were no reports of damage in the town and nothing fell off the shelves or tables in his office.

The town closed several roads in addition they were safe after the quake, Mitsuyasu said.

The Oct. 23 tell that struck Niigata and 40 aftershocks in the days that followed killed 39 people and injured more than 3,000. It was the deadliest quake to hit Japan since 1995, when a magnitude-7.2 quake killed 6,433 people in the western city of Kobe. AP

ACE inhibitors useless to some heart patients

NEW ORLEANS—Patients with mild forms of heart disease did not benefit from the addition of blood pressure drugs called ACE inhibitors on top of the standard treatment regime, according to results of a large study funded by government researchers presented on Monday.

Death and disease rates were the same for ACE inhibitors, which include those made by Merck Laboratories Inc., Pfizer Inc. and Eng Pharmaceuticals, for all patients who've had a heart attack and others with heart disease. It had been unclear if patients with less severe heart disease benefit from the drugs.

"The evidence is sufficient that in the absence of additional benefit, the evidence suggests the drugs add few extra risks for patients who have their heart disease under control with the help of other medications.

"Death rates were no different than in the general population," said Marc Pfeffer, member of the cardiovascular division at Brigham and Women's Hospitals in Boston, and a study author.

Results of the trial were presented at the American Heart Association's annual meeting here in New Orleans.

About 8,200 patients were randomized to get an ACE inhibitor or a placebo in addition to standard treatment. Those getting the ACE inhibitor were no less likely to suffer death, heart attack or need for bypass surgery, compared to patients getting a placebo, according to the results of the study funded by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, a federal agency.

The study will be published in the New England Journal of Medicine.

"These lower risk patients can avoid side effects and the added expense of ACE inhibitors if they are getting treatment at risk for cardiovascular complications," Eugene Braunwald, a study author and member of the cardiovascular division at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, said. Reuters

NEW Zealander Tony Tucker stands near a sign he erected on a road in Christchurch, New Zealand, to condemn the outcome of the 2004 US presidential election Nov. 8. Tucker said he labelled Bush a war criminal because of the number of innocent people killed in the war. "Sure, Iraq was ruled by an evil person (but that) did not give the US president the right to invade a sovereign state," he said. REUTERS

Bush to seek charter ban on same-sex marriage

WASHINGTON—US President George W. Bush will renew a quest in his second term for a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage as essential to a "hopeful and decent" society, his top political aide said on Sunday.

Bush's call for a constitutional ban on gay marriages failed last year in Congress, but his position was seen as a key factor motivating Christian conservatives concerned about "moral values" to turn out in large numbers and help supply Bush with a winning margin in last week's election.

"If we want to have a hopeful and decent society, we ought to aim for the ideal, and the ideal is that marriage ought to be, and should be, a union of a man and a woman," Bush political aide Karl Rove told "Fox News Sunday."

Rove said Bush would "absolutely" push the Republican-controlled Congress for a constitutional amendment, which he said was needed to avert the aims of "activist judges" who would permit gay marriages.

Renewing his push for an amendment—despite its slim chances of success—would be a way for Bush to reward his conservative base. The amendment would face a steep hurdle winning the needed approval of three-fourths of the states.

Second-term agenda

Other items on Bush's second-term agenda included nominating—without a "litmus test" on abortion—judges who would "strictly interpret" the Constitution, and tax reform.

Rove said Bush wanted to review the tax code "in its entirety," which suggested a broad-based reform was possible.

Republicans' ability to deliver on their campaign agenda will help determine whether the party can realize its potential to retain a governing majority for decades, he said.

The gay-marriage issue leaped into the campaign spotlight this year after Massachusetts legalized the practice in response to a state Supreme Court ruling, and San Francisco began performing gay marriages in defiance of a state ban.

Ballot measures in 11 states to ban gay marriages all passed last week. Gay-rights groups have vowed to keep fighting for legal protections of same-sex relationships despite the election setbacks.

Bush said last month that he disagreed with a Republican Party platform provision that would also ban civil unions of same-sex couples, and he said states should be able to allow such legal arrangements if they wish.

Rove elaborated on this on Sunday.

"He (Bush) believes that there are ways that states can deal with some of the issues that have been raised, for example, visitation rights in hospitals, or the right to inherit, or benefit rights, property rights, but these can all be dealt with at the state level, without overturning the definition of marriage as between a man and a woman."

Unnecessary

US Sen. Susan Collins, a Maine Republican, said a constitutional amendment was unnecessary. "The states are perfectly able to handle this important issue on their own," Collins said on CBS's "Face the Nation."

Asked whether Bush intended to appoint anti-abortion judges to Supreme Court vacancies considered likely to come open in Bush's second term, Rove said the president would not use a litmus test. He said Bush wanted his judicial nominees to be "impartial umpires" who would strictly interpret the law and Constitution.

He played down a conservative firestorm over a suggestion last week by Sen. Arlen Specter, a Pennsylvania Republican, that Bush would have a hard time winning confirmation of any Supreme Court nominees who would overturn the landmark Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion. *Reuters*

ROUSING THE NGO SPIRIT IN EVERY FILIPINO

"Where there's a person desiring to make a change in his community, there's an NGO waiting to be born." The essence of Non-Government Organizations' (NGO) role in Philippine society over the last 4 decades has been to promote the general welfare and facilitate the development of communities, particularly the poor and marginalized sectors.

"NGOs have quietly defined their role in our society. In many areas involving the welfare of people and communities, you will find NGOs at work," said Joe Pagsanghan, National Coordinator of CODE-NGO.

"There are consumer groups looking after the interest of the Filipino family, monitoring and addressing issues about prices of basic goods and services," added Pagsanghan. "There are NGO's offering micro-financing at the barangay level or helping farmers find ways to increase their harvest. They also provide education and training and work with cooperatives and other community organizations to provide basic services such as the construction of water systems."

NGOs became a household name in the Philippines when they played a lead role in the People Power revolutions of 1986 and January 2001. Since then, NGOs have "translated" people power into development efforts to help the poor – initiating livelihood projects, teaching new skills, providing capital for business in the form of small loans, community organizing and environment protection, among others.

"There are as many as 67,000 NGOs in the country, providing varied services to various sectors. By working together, coordinating these efforts, it was thought that NGOs could optimize their reach geographically and demographically, as well as maximize the use of their resources. In 1990, ten of the largest NGO networks established the Caucus of Development NGO Networks, or CODE-NGO," said Pagsanghan.

A year after its establishment, CODE-NGO ratified the Covenant on Philippine Development and the Code of Conduct for Development NGOs, landmark documents that would set the ethical standard for NGOs in the way they handle their affairs. Presently, CODE-NGO is the largest coalition of NGOs, claiming 2,500 members.

NGOs' contribution to national development has been significant. For instance, in 2003, CODE-NGO invested a total of P154 million in development projects in 74 out of the 79 provinces in the country.

"The NGO's have an intimate appreciation of the needs of the marginalized sectors of our society, having to work, and, oftentimes, live with them in their communities," said Pagsanghan. "Some donor agencies find NGOs a more effective vehicle for the utilization of their development funds; their independent nature ensures that these funds are used to serve the needs of the community instead of someone else's."

"CODE-NGO has also taken the initiative to institute and enforce good internal governance among its members. At the end of the day, NGOs are accountable not only to their donors and other stakeholders, but especially, to the people they serve. They are the *raison d'etre* or the reason for being of any and all NGOs."

Pagsanghan outlined CODE-NGO's current strategic thrusts, addressing both its members as well as its constituents. Among these are 1) promote transparency and accountability among its member networks and NGOs, 2) build the capability of its members, 3) form and strengthen development partnerships within the NGO community and other sectors of society, and, 4) continue to influence public policy in favor of good governance, social justice and sustainable development.

"We will also continue to support worthwhile development efforts of government and the local communities. With the help and participation of every concerned Filipino, we believe that we can do something to improve the lives of the people who hope to rise above abject poverty and those who are looking for ways to better themselves and society."

Pagsanghan knows whereof he speaks. Having started social work in the frontlines since college, he has been engaged in social development work most of his life. Married to a fellow NGO worker, he had made a choice to take the path of public service, sacrificing any ambitions to partake of the lucrative careers in the corporate corridors of Makati.

Pagsanghan continues to rally support for the NGO cause. "Every one can do his share at making things better. When you see injustice in any form – a man beating his wife, a child being abused or a large company oppressing a community – you can advance the cause by standing up and making yourself heard on their behalf."

"More and more, we are being called upon to help each other. Donor funds from the international community are drying up; less attention is focused on the Asian region. We will have to muster our own resources and our own capabilities to continue the work of social development, particularly among the least fortunate of our neighbors."

NGOs supplement government efforts in addressing the basic needs of these communities, initiating changes that provide opportunities for people who, otherwise, would not have the resources nor the capability to improve their lot.

In an age when doing a good deed makes heroes and front page news, NGO efforts at uplifting people's lives continue to be undertaken with hardly any fanfare. Yet perhaps, it is the people who make up the members of organizations like the CODE-NGO that is redefining the role of a conscientious Filipino citizen, and leading the way towards a just and compassionate society.

Social Development Week 2004 • November 8-12
Glorietta Activity Center

For more information, contact: **CODE-NGO Secretariat**
Tel. 426-6001 locale 6624 / 6625 • Fax: 426-5918
Email: code-ngo@surfshop.net.ph
Website: http://www.code-ngo.org

CODE NGO

In cooperation with Philippine Daily Inquirer

ISSN 0116-2442 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Vol. 19 No. 233

OPINION

Text or post feedback: inquirer.net/email/letter@inquirer.net or 2107 (Globe) or 233 (Smart)

Publisher ISAGANI YAMBOT
Editor in Chief LETTY JANE GONZALEZ-MACASAET
Managing Editor JOSE ma. D. HOCSON
Associate Editor ANNALIZA N. ECARMA
Associate Editor for Readership ROSARIO G. GARCELLANO
News Editor ANTHONY T. ESPINOSA JR. • Deputy News Editor NEAL H. PICHAY
Opinion Editor JAMES F. ARCHES
Photojournalism Coordinator RODOLFO B. REYES JR.
City Editor CHRIS LIM
Associate Editor JAMES F. SANGHUETA JR.
Editorial Consultant ARMANDO DOROMAL
Chief Cartoonist EDUARDO T. MARQUEZ
Art & Design Director LEONARDO A. VILLAMIN

Board of Advisers HERMAN D. PEREZ
President ALEJANDRO PEDRO ROMUALDEZ
Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing ROSARIO R. BAUTISTA
Senior Vice President for Corporate Services EDGAR M. VALDEZ
Vice President for Finance ELIZA G. ELAZEGUI
Officer in Charge ALICIA P. LARDIZABAL

All rights reserved. Except as provided by law, no part of the Philippine Daily Inquirer may be reproduced or distributed in any manner, stored in a database or retrieval system without prior written permission.

Tragedy of errors

LAST Friday, the Department of Education finally admitted that a history textbook used in high schools contained errors more substantial than earlier thought. Education Secretary Florencio Abad said the textbook needed a complete rewording or rewriting of whole paragraphs, not just the identification and correction of mistakes.

EDITORIAL

The textbook, "Yaon: Noon, Ngayon at Bukas," was found to contain 413 errors in its 316 pages. It is not the only textbook that needs to be reviewed. Only last month it was revealed that two science textbooks that were supposedly pulled out three years ago because of errors were still being used in high schools. Probably many others also contain factual and grammatical errors.

Abad said the discovery of errors in "Yaon" had prompted the DepEd to examine other books now being used in high schools. This is as it should be. A thorough review of all books being used in the grade and high schools should be undertaken as the first step. Next, a review of all the textbooks used in colleges and universities should also be conducted.

The schoolchildren in the case of the error-filled textbooks, Antonio Calipjo Go, academic supervisor of Manuel L. Quezon University, deserve the correspondence of all teachers and students. If he had not noticed the errors, the miseducation and bifurcation of hundreds of thousands of students would have continued. As it is, we cannot at this time determine the great harm that the error-filled books has done to the thousands of students who read them in the past few years. How can they unlearn the errors that they have "learned"? Can the errors ever be corrected or erased from their minds, their memories?

The authors of the error-filled books, many of them with MAs and PhDs, should be banned for life from ever writing textbooks again. Their names should be listed and the list distributed to all schools and publishing houses. If ever an Index Librorum Prohibitorum was needed in the Philippines, this is one time.

The big question is: Why did this state of affairs take place and continue in the past seven years, or probably, in some instances, longer than that? Does not the DepEd do a regular review of the books that students are using? And did not the DepEd officials immediately see the havoc that the error-filled books would do to the minds of hundreds of thousands of students?

This tragedy of errors—for certainly this a tragedy, not a laughing matter—probably took place because education is considered a "mass production" thing in our country. Teachers just shovel "information" into young minds, then give them exams to test if they've remembered what they've heard and read, and if they pass, reward them with the prized pieces of paper called "diplomas." Students are taught to be parrots, hoarders of information, instead of being helped to think for themselves.

There is no sense of scholarship, no drive for excellence in our educational system in general. There are centers of excellence, of course, but they are very few. The aim seems to be just to help students finish courses so that when they graduate they will have pieces of paper to show that they are "qualified" to undertake certain professional or vocational tasks. Education has become an automatic, mechanical, almost mindless thing.

And similarly, the preparation of textbooks has become mechanical. Writers just gather some facts from some books or perhaps retrieve them from sometimes faulty memory, and put them in textbooks. There is no meticulous study and research. So rigorous tests and standards of scholarship are applied to the writing of textbooks.

The aim of textbook writers seems to be just to finish the writing and mass-produce the books as fast as possible so that they can collect their fees and the books can be distributed throughout the country. And thus errors, misrepresentations and sometimes, outright lies are perpetuated in the textbooks that the young read. Is it any wonder that the inspirational making of Philippine schools has dropped so low?

After admitting the errors in one textbook, Abad has pointed the way to the right direction. Reexamine all textbooks, rewrite and reword entire chapters of error-filled books, if not entire books, and print new copies. Withdraw the error-filled books from circulation and destroy them. This is one time when book-burning is justified. The error-filled books should not be allowed to poison the minds and misinform hundreds of thousands of students any minute second longer. Consign all these books to the fire.

Can of worms 2,3,4, etc.

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

MARCELINO Lavadores, manager of the Marcos Cebu International Airport Authority, issued instructions objecting to Ombudsman's "ill-fated" memo." (*PDI*, 10/14/04)

The apology glosses over "memo" the Commission on Audit pinpointed. There included five billion in utility P1.4 billion worth of unused fuel, procured 1990, 2 million liters of aviation drive-used Lapu Lapu City's claim for P1.08 billion in "unpaid real estate taxes."

"The culprit is a year old," MCIAA spinmeisters place memo in the copies to halt collection long days with deadline. Are "memory lapses"?

Auditors complained that report is January. The CEA sent it to the board on March 11, 2004. That is, therefore, the current audit. The new audit report will raise early next year.

The Inquirer and Cebu Daily News revealed the CEA findings in mid-October. Until then, even MCIAA employees were kept in the dark, including the auditors' Jesus Jaro-Iloilo Chapter. MCIAA's "no new memo" hardly dot Dean Del position of the airport."

Mea facta: As of Aug. 31, 2004, the COA revealed, the MCIAA was one of 14 agencies that didn't submit adequate reports. Thus, to annual audit, absent "Financial Reports" for the whole government were no proof whether the airport's investment. Cuts of worms No. 2?

Bell knew from "Advice 8-9" points out that the MCIAA's "Summary of Discretionary Expenditures, Surrendered, Unexpended, Granted, Denied and Cancelled to Expenses" is missing. Transparency is not the board's cunning suit. The boarders had to rip their blankets cut-and-again.

The "big stolen" items, however, are elsewhere, including mounting notes. For over 11 years, the board waffled on arranging a definitive ruling from the Bureau of Internal Revenue on whether Philippine Airlines is exempt from value-added taxes. Thus, NGAs uncollected alone lost year added up to P4.2 million.

Separately, the Commission's comment about only the BIR if it has resolved this decade old issue," the MCIAA suggests. This is hush-hush-ing. It's not a newspaper's job to swing dust.

MCIAA's years on the Filipino Diaspora seems to have reached new raw nerves out there. Here are three interesting letters I've gotten in the e-mail. The first comes from Iloilo, the second from Pasay, the third from the United States.

From Alma A. Lapitan of Molo:

"Reading your article 'Alarm bell' and 'Again, arms of heaven' provided a lump in my throat. I do not know if I am a Filipino. I am perceived by other nationalities as not without a nation. I have lived in this country for all of my 40 years. I am trying to raise my children in the fashion we were raised by our parents, particularly especially to obeys, considerate of other people, always striving to be good, pursuing God in all that we do.

"If these values are not what you call citizen, then what is citizen? Is it the clothes we wear? Only very few Filipinos in this country wear their traditional costumes. Is it the food we eat? We still have lechon, sinigang, bulalo, etc.

"It is unfair to accuse the Filipino of lacking a sense of country just because he wants to get a decent paying job abroad, considering that to him is God as home. And what is so wrong about adopting the culture of a country where you are able to survive and eventually earn a respectable life?

"Nobody responsibility is our nature. We can still be Filipinos in a faraway Spanish castle. Even the Chinese were cast and so to their foreign functions. We should be happy that in the Philippines the saving Sagalog became the lingua franca when many dialects existed. Our hardiness for Japanese cars is just coincidence... they're great, eh.

"Why should this be taken against us?

"Culture evolves. Even Berlin changes. If we are happy that some foreigners have chosen to live in the Philippines, why shouldn't we be happy that some of our kababayans have also chosen to like and live in other countries?"

From Cecilia Quiroga of Pasay:

"The absence of functional identity that you have accurately described in your column, 'Alarm Bell' last Sept. 20 has long preoccupied my mind. You brought it up of course in the light of Filipinos' vulnerability to 'OFW-hating' moves on airport taxes, that's this board's, to us hand to do so for over a decade commission panel described of duty. Drivers have been subjected to fees.

Hit, and Waterfront Hotels were exempted from the automatic 2 percent surcharge for delayed payments, the report revealed. Why? Smaller countrymakers must pay, no questions asked.

Its board members sigh any policy for compassion of cronies and alarmed for small fries" interim ministers drove dust between owners and board members, as "Batman and Robin" were "the white connectors is between names and addresses" were swimming, desperate on one hand, and degrading intimidation on the other."

This board is history in one of subterfuges in the proverbial. That's why we recalled then board members Odilo Garcia, Marciano Aviles and others suppose booted President Fidel V. Ramos and bought a $2.66 million theft 4 (12) 02 helicopters, although they were wrecked by then finance officer Josefina Villanio since the bill would have cost the airport.

That "happened eight years ago and is history," the MCIAA said. No, it's not. That would flawed decision scrapped a shoddily bill of $86,227 (or 95,365,134 at the exchange rate then). The deals continued until Mabuhay, which made the helicopter inoperative, based on the MCIAA.

But "the evil that men do lives after them," it's affirming judgment of magistrate Jonathan Mallya to the late Ed Swedenborg with a final order (which indeed MCIAA employees) against investment president Edgar Bonjayon. Only partial benefits have been paid.

For suggesting there were other cans of worms, the board snapped that the Inquirer editorials is "hung up" over pothole-free decision talk. Sorry about that. But all dropouts make to pay taxes.

But are board members home for coddling interests of political and economic overlords? They're shredded civil service rules on qualifications for promotion and "selection" process to their position. Airport workers, it say machines, the tracks, especially the report of Marianito de Ignacio Jimenez will be future cans of worms.

In August 2000, Japan the Ombudsman ordered that MCIAA abuse and responsibility to overturn. While flight operations ruled, Capt. Antony Andrews, which in May 2000. "Our technical evaluation confirmed that it is in an advanced state of deterioration and poses a hazardous condition to flight."

Incidents have occurred since then. A Feb. 1997's tires exploded on touchdown. In August 2002, a Cebu Pacific DC-9's nose were dipped during a September 2003 landing. And in February 2004, Qatar jet landing tires ripped. No fires were lost. But we may not be so lucky next time. Officials, who have failed to politically wired bureaucratic fiefs, has told that for airport customers, play with fires.

Cans of worms No. 3 is in an Ombudsman case over a part of P3.6-million runway "improvement." Why was the bids and awards committee excluded? the COA's Jesu Ismael asked. The audit report brands as "irregular" the release of P7,402,476 for 34,534 gallons of replacement. Cost of thinner A, 5 and 6 may be in those cans. Here's the fix trade, it was the bribes, etc.

The COA never recommended filing of graft charges against anyone, the MCIAA claims. So, we cried out for drawing that "thieves masquerade as MCIAA friends."

Only what is illegal is wrong? The Pharisees might as much. But robbers thieve, stripped of conscience, is satisfy journey. The common good can be arrogant by those ignoring a baby "Bantay Bata 163" drop hotline's. Tsunigo me. There's a crumble in every river.

(E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph)

Letters

THERE'S THE RUB

Cresencio de Quiroz

hesion and banking. I would put the question in a much higher and significant context.

Mention of national identity, to my mind, undermines the crucial question that determines the future of the country and of Filipinos. In our younger days, the nationalist movements of the '60s and '70s gave us hope for the Philippines.

I believed it was also the struggle against imperialism, dependency and till now colonialism would also bring forth the rebirth of a national identity that has long been denied us as by centuries of colonialism. But the pages of history have turned. Apparently, the nationalist movements has not undercover nor unmoored.

That today the forces of globalization have swept all corners of the world. It has multiplied the debts and intensified the powers of stock of the peoples and counter-tax of the world of which the Philippines is now a neocolony. Being a colonial world order that serves the super rich, globalization inevitably cramples on the rights and cultures of nations and people. The workers among them would perish.

To the Philippines, the winds of globalization have intensified the Diaspora of Filipinos. It has plunged the country into a quagmire of debt, poverty, hunger and corruption. It is not for the Filipino instead. No home, no haven, no liberation. Then the Filipino nation is doomed to perish."

From Marvin Carlos of Westside, New York:

"The upon email accidental to his Bell was totally past done by someone with one month free time.

"I agree with you on the part about the elite. "For example, as Executive says, the Filipino Diaspora helps the elite keep the masses quiet. But far more than that, it frees the elite from being threatened by the collapse of the economy. People have wondered why government officials do not seem to be alarmed by the brewing crisis, which, if some financial experts are to be believed, will make us lucky to end up like Argentina. Well, they may not be alarmed by the economy.

"I have to disagree with you on other points. ... To other minorities, local loyalties for a job abroad is the last resort, how it is the first. It is not a compulsion, it is a dream. It is not an act of desperation, it is an act of ambition.

"I tend to side more with those who view other countries for what they are, as places to earn a living in their economies. For example, I have friends who have been in the United States, and most of them are here for reasons in between desperation and ambition. I've had Chinese, Koreans and Mexican friends who've decided to stay in the United States for good. Those who did so because they found opportunities here. Those people I have back in California were the well-educated type—artists, accountants, civil engineers, business people, etc.

"I don't see why these things should interest—what you say about your countrymen, what the phrase by. Still writer says about Filipino, or whatever happened or self-important feedback on Diaspora is said many day. There are many Filipinos who have left the country, but I wouldn't read or listen to it and then feel a sense of epiphany or shame about myself and my racial identity afterwards. And I don't like how you set up specific people as examples. Can be a joke is the double-of hostel replacement. If the board supporters down instead, orderly were my relatives or friend, I would encourage him to go back on the pitch of practicing medicine. (And maybe that's what he's after in other). But I would not be ashamed of him as a embarrassment. I certainly don't think anyone reason being disconcerted as a Filipino points child of national betrayal."

US election a non-event on Chinese TV

I DISAPPEARED from the country last week, got my passport, and ran until I reached a gangway of aircraft or relatives and friends in an eight-day package tour of Beijing and Shanghai arranged by entrepreneur Betty Lopez-Santiago of "Imperial Information Bureau. It was the perfect time to visit Beijing and Shanghai (cities of China so far his autistic searches was not yet that cold, even up in the Great Wall in the autumnous cascade fashion. We flew to Shanghai and back to Beijing on China Eastern Airlines. Flights were fully booked. I was not that despite the shopping bust, for, still makes the uncommon kind of trip—light as a feather from Shanghai on flow to Beijing on a Chinese carrier.

...

I first visited China in 1980 together with a group of book publishers and editors led by Lorenzo G. Reyes of the Sentinel Publishing. Hanging from all my children's Christmas stand that day, who were then very young. At that time, China was still closed to the world. The first time I went on compassion to get there: Coca-Cola, was just beginning its first factory in Beijing and people danced to the music (hello, Mr. Chairman) as government was friendship here to shop in and the Chinese women were long-fo shoes, black pajama-like pants and no make-up.

...

At the time, the city was still digging its vast first inner ring, and each time I was always enthralled by its incredible tourist wonders as well as the remarkable transformation of the eastern and coastal eastern regions (the "open door" policy of Deng Xiaoping, he assured very poor and underdeveloped). Particularly phenomenal is the booming growth of coastal Shanghai over the past 10 years.

...

At the annual dinner hosted by ambassador Willy Yee and his wife Linda, we heard of the preparations the Chinese are making for the 29th Olympiad whose different events are to be held in the Chinese cities in 2008. For the two other, the Olympiad will kick off on Aug. 8, 2008 as it is on. (Only the original "Otto, one".) Since they won the right to stage it, no effort has been spared to make the 16 cities Olympiad-ready for competition. The year 2008 will definitely be China's international debut, and its host muscle from by record of the traditional host: hosting the United States.

Everywhere we went, the chaotic confusion, a play on a Chinese character, was visible, and Olympic-minded people are already very modest in Beijing, four years before the event. Ambassador Gao said China is allocating $21.5 billion for the Olympic infrastructure construction, including the 130,000-seat national stadium designed like a bird's nest. The target date for completion of the Olympic arenas is 2006 and included in the between planning is increasing the current 500 tax hotels to 800. Common all this to the way the Chinese Olympics will be held, I was told that Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games could package each low-budget hotel, but after seeing the Filipinos' frenzied shopping (in fact almost) in everywhere in a month, I realized that all China needs to get the tourists is them. Then they would surely be lured into dropping for goods and gadgets that are so inexpensive, compared to those in the West. Obviously it's the most important to China that economic and domestic stability keep those myriad factories spinning with their fears, thus employing many millions of workers.

...

There was one curiosity we noted: the US election caught on in Beijing but there was hardly any news about it on local TV including the only English-language broadcast. (It was also difficult to get hold of English-language newspapers.) Although it was literally translated, the election seemed to be a non-event for the Chinese, who chose instead to fill the TV channels with old war movies. The only good movie program I saw was one where analysts were interviewed on what the Bush victory would mean for China.

The non-news treatment was, of course, less reading for us Filipinos, for whom things were different. We found out that our two Chinese guides, both young men, were rooting for John Kerry, while an overwhelming majority of the 25 others were for Bush. There was a lot of bantering going on, one group kept up with the news, especially the battle for pivotal ohio, through texts from their SMART online YP by loyal affairs. Nite Against lost his wife Tina and the whole fun period on the weekend count). My husband's late account COB on his computer gave us a rubble.

...

A week after the US election, everyone has moved his palace so we take Bush seen. Definitely there was no way the Chinese could be convinced that Kerry wouldn't be so decisive in battling terrorism as Bush, and the appreciation on US television of Osama bin Laden threatening America with video tapes of his latest exploits (from outer space, by the way). Maybe Arafat (then outer space, by the way). Maybe Arafat (then outer space, by the way). Maybe Arafat (then outer space, by the way). As he left Manila, Palestinian chief Yasser Arafat was being flown to a Paris hospital where he subsequently lapsed into coma. His near death situation spurred speculation on who will succeed Palestinian issue: Who's going to succeed him? How will it impact on the chaotic situation on the reconsidered problem? The newscasters were more preoccupied with more edge than ever, and they went for Bush.

Then, too, as US analysts noted, there was a massive shift of rural American voters, who are deemed very conservative, to Bush in the last few weeks, as they sought refuge in his black-or-white stand on such issues as gay marriage and abortion. Reports noted the vast, reportedly high turnout from the evangelical communities in rural areas. Regarding my propaganda opinion on Bush:

What's more, popular assessments have become powerful and arrogant they keep the current homage by going on in the Josephine with losing sale (whenever they want their interviews.

The group was not meant to be a model of public transportation. It was conspicuous, a make do. How my humble government allowed it to become a double member is beyond me?

Once the mid-street rail ridings, the air then dividing the city into both lanes of bus-jitt streets and car-unfriendly. They are millions of japanese money. They were built because people found the bus and the police would not remove it. The New Comfort Bus, which is supposed to be a problem since since since unsophisticated. Either people could read or they are simply stupid or ugly.

And why can't the police enforce the law? Lesson to miss. Rules are for people.

Then the multitude of rail regulations is that people cannot distinguish between what's right and wrong, what's good or bad for the community.

Other institutions appear dumb and ridiculous. Like the MMDA's prohibition on the use of cellular phones while driving. Good idea, but utterly unenforceable now. A decision, likely, utterly made that I was daily from Pasay, Manila, to Santa Rosa, Laguna. No data anywhere in the world I have a Safari cap for a road. Only in the Philippines. The railway company operates the Metro Rail Transit. Despite the same demands of squatters living in shacks along the rails have seen sanitation, garbage disposal and hygiene facilities like toilets, so they wrap their garbage and excreta—and throw them on the train roof now carried at the way to Laguna.

It's of course humbling to squatters's human rights interests and the problem, take heed to the hundreds of signs on the railroad tracks with that warning: "Buying shanties up out or. Subway up under! Metro. Pi. Bee."

What about the difficulties Filipinos have falling in line? Ah, this minor discussion. Rant is another column. Maybe I can call it "Rants on parade." In short, Huang kong pagpag pinoy!

Minyong Ordoñez, 65, is head of Public Affairs.

Dirty

We felt I was in college, I couldn't wait to finish my course. I spent a lot of time in class daydreaming of what life would be like after college and how one day I would meet the man in the sky of graduation day and he'd throw me his name with it, not to mention the independence I was going to enjoy. I dreamt of finally doing what I wanted to do with my life and how fun and fulfilling it would be.

...

Now I am finally living that life, and I wish I could tell both time and to school again. Contrary to my thoughts, life after college is not pure bliss.

What I was still studying. I knew that earning a few pesos would be a hassle, but I was willing to do almost anything just so I could be rid of my lessons and have the liberty to do what I always dreamed of doing. I was tech and tired of sitting inside a classroom and listening to lectures. Talk about change, and I couldn't wait for the action. I wanted to go out and finally put what I had learned into practice, to share with others the beauty of life I imagined and to somehow say thank for the benevolence of the nations.

You can say that I was very idealistic then. I imagined myself as a crusader for change. If I could give just a little push in the right direction, I thought, then things would get better. All I needed to do was give a good example and others would quickly see the error of their ways and realize that doing the right thing was the correct.

Now I know why people consider a little when I tell them what I want to be in the future. And to hard as it is to admit it, I know that they are right. As a friend once told me, when an idealistic realizes is when he studies with it. That's why I am now acting all grim face.

I haven't ever been to the government service for two years and I can already say that I don't need to see more to know that it is one of the most corrupt institutions in the world. The most important programs of our agency, and from day one, I encountered setbacks. The culprit were making commissions, letting my luck about how committed I was, inspiring the position they themselves couldn't get after many years of working with the agency. Some of my superior didn't take to hide their doubts about my ability as handle the job given my young age. Even people from other offices of our agency talked about how "failing" I was when I made frequent follow-ups of some important projects.

But I held my ground and did my job, and slowly gained the respect of my peers. Even when I thought I had earned it, it passed my bapraise of fire, I found out it wasn't over yet.

I handled my responsibilities well. I can say this without reservation because the very same clients who used to mock me for my youth and inexperience started seeking my advice on every issue. I became very busy. I haven't felt this busy since my days in college. I was achieving what I wanted to achieve and I was growing change in the process.

But the worst of contradictions I was getting fiery my job—to about quickly. Soon I was plagued with problems and complaints about my character. I was disappointed. I have always tried to do my best in my job and I have strictly adhered to the rules, but it appears that not everyone is happy with that, not everyone is worthwhile following the rules and correct procedures.

I thought the industry needed public servants who were honest, who were dedicated to their jobs, but it seems I was wrong. The more I stick to my principles and follow what is right, the more obstacles I have to battle.

It doesn't help that my boss sees principles as outstanding laughable. Even she thinks I'm too much of a soldier for the office. She has consigned me to many important but unwanted assignments with duties whose want to take down me.

But what when has doing a good job and being honest become a bad thing? I have done my best and served honestly and this is the reward I get. I am not capacity to teach. All I want is that others do the right thing, but I guess that is too much to ask for.

I am tired of fighting. I am tired of holding my head high. I'm afraid that before long I will be swept away by the current and drown.

I have just the five-year-planned no-return. Joined the agency. One after that, I just got through the motions of doing my job. I refer objectivity and perhaps even the line I promised I'd never cross.

Something is missing. I have lost my heart and my desire to do my job well.

Maybe I lie to what happened, was, to the millions of other government employees. They get caught with errors applies and ended up resigned to their fate. Maybe one person just keeps going. I just hope I won't suffer a similar fate.

Bitay, 23, has a bachelor's degree in public administration from the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

Young Blood

Bitay

Notice to Youngblood contributors

If you are sending your contributions by e-mail, please address it to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph, together with your address and information about your age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or if employed, the part-time/work building student company you assist with.

'Barriotic'

Commentary

Minyong Ordoñez

THATS how my late parents, Tony Mercado, described my staunch behavior of Filipinism. Ben't out names from the word "barrio."

Parents are not educated men such as swimming on the wall walls of gun stations, chattering into the mid-mad iron lesser on U.S. quarreling noncalorie food with Chinese salesmen in a Hong Kong eatery store, serving Cabernet Sauvignon in a plastic cup, calling someone "friend" and not "pare" or "compadre."

Why barrio? It's because whether we are international urbanites in Manhattan or middle-class residents in Caribbean Gardens, we usually are subject to the same basic urges and needs as the rest of the world's citizens: to be a lot, to see or get memorable sights from unusual locations and to meet other people.

The age gap may make but the cultural gap doesn't. Our first lesson our parents' quirks, which we find so funny now, was when they would be a combination of some bishop's pacing under the banana tree in Barrio Upang?

Recall the time about the time who climbed over the fence? Or U.S. security guards who, in taking leg-out street by suspending shirt? Think again of the tie pennies and you'll understand the poor's ingenuity. Remember, while rules are advances in barrio life. Middle measures like sardines, loners, and gangs are not to be found in barrios.

The nonexistence of traffic rules in barrio life also explains why taxi and bus drivers who are now migrate to the city drive like demons from hell. Some drivers simply disregard the warning curves. Some, like the cavaliers, they were brought to the driver's seat of a Fiat delivery truck, like the Ohioans, Dutch and Italians, they should have at least children's bike and learned enough to maybe crash when I am crash.

The cultural gulf is also why Caucasian friend's guest in a phone-up he probably a relative he/she get's natural manners of his sister's parents' bed. She also took a shortcut from street in a plane to push the button of the elevator. Her parents were suicidechoo with white wine. So chose to get educated, to mix with better, rich societies, to acquire taste.

The "Pinoy" thing is not so weird. It's simply

Political Tidbits

Belinda Olivares-Cantiveros

...

...

...

Domestic oil prices defy 'law of gravity'

LETTERS

In 2H 04AT two days, crude oil prices went down going down to the lowest level at market in the wake of China's effort to cool its economy and amid reports of some recovery in the American-hammered Gulf of Mexico. (PDI, 11/3/04)

Unfortunately, that has not translated into lower prices of oil products in the country, which seem to defy the "law of gravity", super quick in going up but equally slow in going down.

The Downstream Oil Deregulation Law of 1998 (RA 8479) left oil prices entirely to market forces, stripping the government of its power to intervene in the downstream oil industry. It was believed that leaving the oil players into themselves would motivate the rationalization of the industry and ultimately benefit the consuming public.

After several years of deregulation, the public is far worse off. Notwithstanding the much heralded benefits of deregulation, the prices of petroleum products move up at the slightest excuse than the three giant oil firms of Shell, Caltex and Petron can think of. These three have right control of about 90 percent of the local oil market, dominating 10 percent is shared by the small segment. The prevailing rule is "follow the leader", one oil firm raises its price for the firmness of reasons and the others, including the small players, instantaneously follow suit. The consuming public is left with no choice but to swallow the prohibitive prices.

There is a law (RA 7581) which is supposed to protect consumers against hoarding, profiteering and the open season of cartels. However, it does not for petroleum products among the basic necessities and prime commodities it covers. Oil firms can thus raise their prices sky-high without having any regulations.

Unless adequate, compelling measures are adopted, Energy Secretary Vicente Perez can throw himself bodily against an oil firm to be considered in the hoarding scheme. His plaintive cries will remain unheeded.

Deregulation has shown that the desire for profit is the overriding motivation of oil industry players who consider it core investment providing an adequate supply of petroleum products as fair and affordable prices.

We therefore join the growing public clamor for the scrapping of the Oil Deregulation Law and the adoption of measures by the government that would effectively protect the rights of consumers from capitalist greed.

—ROMEO N. SALVADOR JR.,
Pro-Labor Legal Assistance Center,
116-A G. Araneta Ave.,
Quezon City

Stop continuing trial by publicity

Chief Prosecutor, Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo, are offering sentences for office, referred to his boss. I refer to his boss, Michael Defensor. Rampage with this question: "Wasn't the the same person who made arbitrarily unlimited trips from charges of Lavinia, that), despite a pile of evidence that would deserve the sullen basketball player to the penitentiary?

If Dr. Garcia stay south, I was warned from the presidency because the Senate vened, after democratic debate and vating, not to reject the so-called "second ob- stringer" impeachment complaint for contain damning evidence against me. In the plunder case for which I am now being tried, the prosecution did not even present its witnesses; the fact is there was nothing in the records of the Senate impeachment trial to support the charges. That's the problem with mass lynching and the high heritage of the masses.

The pile of evidence my detractors say exist should have been presented by the prosecutors. Now it is my turn, and you can see how desperately it is preventing the presentation of evidence that can clear me. For one, the National Bureau of Investigation agent who investigated the tobacco excise tax issue and cleared me is now being disciplined.

I appeal to Dr. Dulos to stop the continuing trial and conviction by publicity against me. I have been in detention since April 2001, and under a new rule in criminal cases enacted so my only way out, instead, is for the supposed prosecutors to rest. I am trying to present my side under very difficult conditions; the continuing prejudgment by some columnists denies me a speedy disposition to do so.

For this to obtain democratic means a constitutional presumption. For a blood contractor to prejudge my guilt on a matter that is sub judice violates my human and constitutional rights so that process is further emasculated. The rule of law died viously in 2001 when the military, the Supreme Court and the civil society trusted my 2004 mandate. Today they would considerable passion that have disturbed the constitutional balance. I wish to the journalists that the rights to the presumption of innocence is preserved.

—JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA

Thanks to PDI

We wish to thank the masses for publishing the article "Bamboo dongpo ulam: Pinoy delicacy or budding science?" (PDI, Oct. 19). This is a step to understand lessons for accommodating the nation. Tesis to U. Sabang who turned such dull subjects as bamboo and snail into an entertaining story of human interest. Also, researching that Salonga is a very enterprising writer. She was instrumental in pursuit of the truth, in demanding proof and documents to verify our assertions to the point of interviewing our "fast food" customers and engineers for more details.

Special thanks to Editor-in-Chief Marissa Pineda, editor of the Property section, for making the story a human headline.

Should there be inquiries regarding the "Bamboo" article, readers may kindly get this telephone number of our office: 852-27-71.

—EMILIO GUEVARA GARCIA,
Team Philippines Inc.,
250 Velazquez Bldg., Pajo Avenue ext.,
Dian St., Makati City

'Price freeze' to soften crisis impact on people's lives

Pathetic politicians

"[Rizal] reduced as form consumer," (PDI, 11/4/04) What politicians come to hate luckily two days after the most lowly colonized president-elect-hero of the published history of the American people?

In each of contrast to that, the colonists of art was even elevated, for last five. Ruben Barbers to expansively said commissioning for how the Supreme Court the proclamation of five. Rodolfo Biazon by the Commission on Elections.

The contrast is, of course, unobtainable on film, a new definitively one-eye, cold cousin, and/or cousin, lack of sportsmanship among our politicians. The one we obey my probably digress for late Magdalena Jalandoni—he other senior ostensible. How pathetic!

—KEITH L. CHIONG,
81 Ermua St., Calderon Country Homes,
Alangilan, Batangas City

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of your news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Ayala and Makati Avenues, City of Makati, or write to Fax No. 892-4793, 897-8704, or e-mail <readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph>

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Inspiring Boy Scout story should be in textbooks

If it has not been done yet, the heroism of Wilfredo Abello, Antonio Antes and Valentine Tibon (PDI, 11/1/04, "Heroism") by Belinda Dilverio Cuenton and "8 Inspiring Boy Scout Acts" by Allan Bautista) should be told in our elementary textbooks. The bravery of these three helped save the lives and honor of thousands of Filipinos, even as they maintained the calm, confidence and "war-tradition" of Gen. Douglas MacArthur's liberating forces. Each heroism also should be recalled in the annals of Philippine history to inspire all Filipinos from future humanitarian years.

Four or five days before 60 years after the iconic Landing—the Philippine government can and properly extend the recognition due them by giving their deserving awardees posthumous awards. Abello's heroism and contribution to the war effort, makes him worthy of a higher honor than just being recognized as a "third of the 12 veterans."

I should even suggest that the town of Tolosa (if this is the site of the heroism) erect a monument to them. What a great sense of pride it would be for the townspeople of Tolosa to show the instrumental role of Abello, Antes and Tibon did in opening away of heroism in their home-town—values and courage.

As a Filipino and a former Boy Scout, I will share in the pride.

—ADOLFO G. PAÑO,
12 Villamor St., 39 Bonita,
Sucat, Parañaque City

Missing the VP?

We are just wondering about Vice President Noli de Castro's taboo behavior these days. He's supposed to be the president-in-waiting but other officers, or his head of a task force to take care of overseas Filipino workers.

While even Filipinos now held captive in Iraq and Afghanistan, where is he?

—FRANCISCO GRANADA,
fmadrone1953@yahoo.com

Word of thanks for Cunanan

[illegible] of the Manila time, as one of the proud grandchildren of my Lolo Herming [Boy Scout Salvador] Abello, I would like to express our sincere thanks made to Inquirer columnist Belinda Olivares-Cunanan for recalling his heroic act which saved the lives of thousands of [illegible] during the World War II. (PDI, 11/1/04) I hope that Cunanan's column will remind Filipinos that acts of selflessness can achieve great heights, even sometimes.

—ADRIAN ABELLA MERCADO,
labang@gmail.com

InqBox

Dear Readers, Just as your comments, suggestions and views on today's issues or how it was delivered, let us know if you have any interesting story that fellow readers would be interested in. Use fellow you most important text INQBOX@ or mail to: Inquirer, 40 Yakal St., Makati City. Include your complete address and telephone number for verification purposes. Please limit your letter to 200 words. Letters may be edited for brevity and clarity.

Among friends, family and others who have passed away, who do you miss most after the news? Why?

Joy Lolo, sister, also only spoke Bikolnon, she understood. I'm close I love. The football taught us lessons why we are strong house lolololos were we could dress. I miss her.

—jp bambo, IC

I remember most, Ninoy Aquino's death. It was sad and tragic. A all Filipinos other for died because he was a good man. **—ralph thomas, dover city**

I remember most my father. And yes hunting and also my preferences, principles and values of my self. My mentor. **—MA. CHRISTINA BALDERRAMA, DBA, B.C.**

my father. A loving, caring, humble, teacher, walking encyclopedia, prayer man, an artist...a bad singer...a terrible one. May God... **—natalie-thea, or**

My Mom. We were not even residents of your & comfort due only a month or last thing. This I STILL feel just loyal more thoughts of her.

—elia del rosario, new

our national heroes, to me of the good things they have done for our country. **—noel ralph dalisay, los baños, laguna**

My my life, I was in kind courage to fight cancer just like she with his family on 2 his last breath he fought hard. I love.... **—DIVA, diliman, metro city**

If Isabel death of Wilda Blanca, it is when of Jacob of Jacob of Jacob of Jacob charmy. Grace is still unsolved. **—Ma. Kristina Jimenez,** baguio

My big parting, she comforted me when I cried, hugged me when I'm sick, put my make up when I gonna start, rejoicing to heaven when I pass of her.... **—JOCEL—Land, manila**

KYLIE, my young cousin in the grave his life in a war, a war of prejudice, a war that is not worth dying of.! **—Levy Ell, Malabon**

My Lolo Agustin G. He was an intellectual person who writtingly eloquent up 2 his last years. He loved 2 be with edible spurs. **—Isaac christian, pasay**

Dad.... my pillar of strength who taught me humility + honesty, to love + others, living by simply with God is of center. **—Maurice Palanca,** Taguig, Davao Sur

My youngest brother NAILED to and operated brain tumor in high school, seriously talked, can lead a person of mine, nobody has a memory of him. He never wished him. **—Tad Alampay, QC**

I remember my grandmother most when died 2 yrs ago bec., she was a good grandmother to a mere dog & sang it. **—Rodina Sebastian,** Mandaluyong

My MOTHER (RIP) She died when I was a kid I don't remember her face, I miss so much as much! Now I'm 31 yrs old. **—mimi sombrero de jesus,** makati city

Bc hard I forget my BEST FRIEND who died 3yrs ago. He MARRIED a GIRL OF HAPPY & SAD MOMENTS together. **—Erick Blanco Dignoon**

I remember JAN 1972. He was only seventy when he learned how to [illegible] and [illegible] he was only a baby can grow. I'll died seventy when his birthday. **—Paul,** manila

I always remember my son his passed away 3yrs ago. Being was first child, he left fond memories which will last a lifetime. **—antonette pabilico,** Angeles city

My Lolo... how was he was old. when I left very close I was when I was a kid, we used 2 bet dollar and Lolo is a long time. **—Herbert Lacbo Torres, Malabon City**

Jesus Christ— his death shocked throughout 2 world. Saved us from sin. **—Rodi,** Bukidnon

Marina. she survived our love stories, from the 1 children down 1 her 10 yrs old. **—edgardo t mendiola,** Bataan

RIDO Aquino. **—paul Rigor,** Davao City

I often remember my Lolo Eddy bcos of the lessons he like he taught me to that I want me a better person I am right now. **—irene dizo, qc**

MOM!! —after all these years...her love & understanding is still urgent! **—Hestor de Mayo,** Pasig, Taguig

My beloved youngest brother Jr. who died on his 20th birthday. **—Victoria Gengajong,** Dagupan

My Grandfather, he's like a father also and he died in my arms. **—Lorie, q.c.**

my grandfather bcs because he was the closest to me, he loved me. Because most days in his house everything he it like one I remember most. **—Andrew,** antipolo

my father. I was born not seen for died, people said I'd grow up not knowing him, but I remember. his smile, his voice, his calloused hand. I miss him. **—A. Espiritu,** Iloilo

my dad, he taught me I feel god, respect other people. **—raquel p., qc**

my dad, I miss doing talks, debates, his advices, his concerns, and motivations I think of my top his plan of my mom. Gerard B.I. **—Arlene gutierrez,** mandaue city

I remember most my dear father he gave me unconditional love, showered his utmost care & facilitated to me & value of being a good citizen. **—M. Jacelo Alfonso,** naga city

I remember Lolo very well, he died last June & I can still recall a particular [illegible] he used to tell me. He was a unique public person. **—ALEXIS TABUCLAN, IC**

My LOLO DIOSDADO he was my BIG BOY during my childhood, and very SPECIAL LOLO. Farmer. Thank you LOLO. **—DENNIS, ALCANTARA, QC**

My maternal grandmother, Bel Tinay. She used to make tea cakes for us, tel-spiel. **—Carina G. camacho,** caloocan, pangasinan

I always remember my grandpa most, and we never even see him in my times when he was alive, & he taught me not, and did I ride slowly. Why? **—mark Bernandez,** manila

My Brother, cause he has endured myself, [illegible] illness but was survived down. **—Eugene Tongol,** angeles City

My Dad, because he lived a simple life, yet had many, many friends. **—Migi L., Pasig City**

my grandfather. He is a most passionate person that I know and he always does his best in everything. He cared so much 4 others. **—Jane Paladino,** Montalbapa City

My beloved Auntie Lorinda, because I only had kindness & concern from her. I remember if she has called Sister well!! **—mellisa Bangayan,** Lt. Imperial, Bangkal

Mercy Aquino, Cecilio Javier, Ate Lolet Tongson. He spent old mornings with Cecilio Javier, who attended classes & senior [illegible] nobody wanted classes but Cesar was, but she signed 25 student prosecutor, she was also Cesar's friend months in her notes. All those who have lost their lives to the service of our country. **—m. reyes,** manila

[illegible]

Across the **NATION**

[illegible]

100,000 Luzon drivers go on strike

A JEEPNEY in Pangasinan with posters expressing sympathy with the transport strike.

ANGELES CITY—Some 110,000 jeepney and tricycle drivers in Central Luzon stopped plying their routes yesterday, crippling public transportation in the region's five cities and four provinces.

The strike was the fifth staged this year to protest the series of oil price increases, especially the latest.

Classes in public and private schools in the city were suspended due to the strike. The city government also suspended work in the city hall.

In Malolos, Bulacan, the provincial government suspended classes in all schools and declared a half-day work for government employees. Work at the provincial capitol in the City of San Fernando was suspended.

Nelly Santos, spokesperson of the Pinagsanib Samahan ng Tsuper at Operators Nasyonalis (Piston) in Central Luzon, said the government should stop the oil price increase and give millions of drivers nationwide a relief from the economic crisis.

Pistons also called for the scrapping of the 10 Deregulation Law, which Santos said allowed oil firms to unilaterally increase oil prices.

Santos said the cost of diesel per liter rose 14 times since January, raising the price from P15.84/LOTO 1.9 to P[illegible] on Monday.

At a cumulative increase of P9.70 per liter and an average consumption of 12 liters daily, Santos said drivers were losing P88.40 in potential income to oil companies.

"The daily income is down to between P160 and P200. The amount is hardly enough to support a family," Santos told the reporters.

Romeo Nilda said the P1.00 increase in minimum fare per kilometer last July hardly helped drivers like him recover lost earnings from the oil price hikes.

The strike, in its assessment of Pistons, was successful in some parts of Central Luzon.

Pistons said transportation was 90 percent paralyzed in Pampanga including the cities of Angeles and San Fernando, and 98 percent paralyzed in San Jose City in Nueva Ecija, and San Ildefonso and Malolos City in Bulacan.

In Subic, Zambales and other parts of the region, he said drivers held simultaneous mass barrage pickets and an hour of work stoppage.

The Pinoy-led strike, which began at 5 a.m., was scheduled to end at 5 p.m., this on Monday.

Several quarrels between jeepney and tricycle drivers broke out in Angeles City and nearby Mabalacat, reports said.

Tricycle drivers took advantage of the situation, piled their trades and charged P10.00 for a 5 km route. Some tricycle drivers charged a minimum rate of P50 per passenger.

The Philippine National Police said the strike failed to paralyze the entire region.

Senior Supt. Abelardo Villacorta, regional police operations chief, said only 20 percent of transportation was crippled in Malolos City.

The course in Angeles City-San Fernando, Tarlac-Cabanatuan, Capas-Bamban-Angeles and Gerona-Tarlac were grounded, he said.

Transport services were normal through out Pampanga except in Mabalacat, Magalang and Porac, Villacorta said.

"The strike did not affect other areas in the region," he said.

In Tarlac, thousands of commuters in Tarlac City and in 17 towns of Tarlac were stranded as 90 percent of more than 2,000 public utility jeepneys and mini-buses in the province refused to ply their routes on Monday.

Apart from the oil price increases, the Tarlac Transport Federation protested the apprehension of traffic violators being implemented by the Tarlac City government. Ernesto Ortpez, Jun Mitig, Russell Arabit and Rolando Ignacio, PhD Central Luzon Desk

WILSON
WET & DRY
It's a dance the floors of the most prestigious buildings, first class hotel, famous restaurants, finest malls, well known hospitals, upscale schools & universities, public and private offices, churches and chapels, mansions, bungalows, apartments and homes.
Built to Last
AVAILABLE THROUGH
GENERAL PEDRANO

Cops nab San Carlos scion for drug trade

BACOLOD CITY—Police on Sunday arrested a scion of a prominent family who was suspected of being the main distributor of shabu in San Carlos City, Negros Occidental.

Arrested Benjo, 30, was arrested during a raid conducted by a team of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) and local policemen in his house in San Juan Subdivision in San Carlos, about 110 km southeast of his city.

Arrested with Benjo was Judith Rilvario, his alleged live-in partner who reportedly also served as a shabu courier, and Supt. Rosario de la Paz, San Carlos police chief.

He said complaints of illegal possession of firearms and violations of Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act would be filed against the two before the San Carlos City Prosecutor's Office.

De la Paz said the team recovered from the house of Benjo 20.6 grams of suspected shabu worth about P1,300; 3.2 grams of alleged [illegible] marijuana leaves and P43,680 in cash believed to be proceeds from the sale of prohibited drugs.

Dr. Jo Paz said both Benjo and Rilvario were found positive for the use of prohibited drugs.

Benjo, a sugar planter who belonged to a prominent family in San Carlos, had been tagged as the main distributor of shabu in San Carlos City.

Police said Benjo distributed shabu in packets by "bahu," whatever equivalent to five grams.

Benjo also tapped the list of drug personalities in the records of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency and the local police, said Dr. la Paz.

He quoted Benjo as saying his supply of shabu came from Cebu and Rilvario was the one to his dealers and drug pushers of shabu in San Carlos City regularly get their supply from Benjo, he added. Carlo F. Gomez, PhD Negros Bureau

Top Isabela cop, 4 of his men sacked

ILAGAN, Isabela—A top police official in Isabela and four of his men were relieved after they allegedly tried to extort P400,000 from a businessman arrested for allegedly possessing unlicensed firearms.

Relieved were Supt. Antonio Abellon Jr., provincial director of the police's Criminal Investigation and Detection Team; SPO4 John Bello, police community relations and supply officer; PO3 Ignacio Lanigan Jr., intelligence and investigation chief; PO2 Arnold dela Cruz, evidence custodian and driver; and PO1 Lauro Gallovin Jr., investigator.

The relief order, which the policemen said came from high-er officials, was implemented by Supt. Ismael Lapira, regional chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

Reports said businessman Mel-rich Joseph Gomez filed the complaint after CIDG members seized two unlicensed 9mm Beretta pistols, 6 12-gauge shotguns and bullets from his house in Barangay San Antonio in Delfin Albano on Oct. 5.

Gomez, a relative of former Isabela Gov. Benjamin Dy and Delfin Albano Mayor Edward Go, said the policemen later demanded P400,000 to "fix" his problem.

Abellon and Bello were transferred to the CIDG-Cagayan Valley office in Tuguegarao City while Lanigan and Gallovin were assigned to the CIDG Santiago City Drug Unit. Dela Cruz was assigned to Metro Manila.

Abellon denied Gomez's allegations, saying they just served a search warrant.

The CIDG team earlier asked Judge Cesar Dumlao for a search warrant after they received information that Gomez was hiding seven high-powered guns.

"Anybody can easily concoct allegations to support their claims," Abellon said.

"This is politics. There are powerful [people] who worked for our relief. But we have to follow orders," he said.

He said there were "powerful and rich people meddling in police and legitimate police affairs."

The Isabela prosecutor's office, however, dismissed the illegal possession of firearms charges against Gomez last week, saying the seized guns were properly documented. Filibster Hoyos Jr., PhD Northern Luzon Bureau

SAN PABLO CITY RAID

16 kidnapping suspects nabbed

SAN PABLO CITY—Information from a fingerprinted member of a kidnap-for-ransom gang that is also involved in car theft led to the arrest of 16 persons, including five women, in a police operation in Barangay Caliban this city yesterday.

Senior Insp. Albert Garcia, city police chief, said they raided the Alvero Traveller's Inn at around 7:30 a.m., after locating one of the former gang members Reyan Chan, smuggler policy help and tipped off the gang members' hideout.

Garcia said the arrested suspects were members of the Boat Tang who had victimized dozens of businessmen and commercial establishments in Southern Tagalog and Bicol in the last five years.

He said among those arrested were suspected gang leader Alexander Oliva and Michael Perabia.

Garcia withheld the names of the other suspects.

He said the group was also active in highway and bank robberies.

Garcia told the reporters that Chan's arrest in his office early morning Monday and asked the help of one of his police officers.

He said Chan "looked very afraid" when the latter showed up at the police station.

"Chan told us that members of the syndicate were after him. He said they wanted him dead. He added that the group had already killed one of their members. Kaya kaya siya mas-nauna, nagsumbong na siya sa amin. (That's why before anything could happen to him, he spilled the beans)," Garcia said.

He said the owner of the inn told police that the group had rented the area for an indefinite period a few months back, after the management decided to close down the establishment.

He said the owner had no idea that the occupants were gang members.

Police recovered several firearms, including hand pistols and a shotgun, and a number of cellular phone units believed to have come from the suspects' victims.

Garcia said they also recovered the Toyota Hi-Lux (NEW 333) that the suspects took from one of their victims during a follow-up operation in Barangay San Jose.

Carnapping

The suspects' operation involved identifying themselves as members of the communist-led New People's Army.

Garcia said the group was behind the abduction of businessman Bobby Uracco who was taken by the suspects from his fish cage in Pinkpinkin Lake last September.

The suspects later freed Uracco along a feeder road in Candelaria, Quezon after receiving that they got the wrong person.

Garcia said the group was also behind the abduction of a certain Moly, a mall owner in the San Pablo Market, who then released after paying P180,000 in cash and P500,000 worth of jewelry.

He said the group's latest victims were a passenger jeep and a pawnshop, which the group committed last Nov. 2.

The suspects are detained at the San Pablo City Jail. Garcia said they have already filed cases against the suspects after several witnesses had identified them.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Governor asks MILF to leave villagers in peace

COTABATO CITY—Maguindanao Gov. Datu Andal Ampatuan has appealed to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to refrain from harassing villagers to spare civilians from the hardship of evacuation.

"Especially at this holy month of Ramadan, I appeal to soldiers from violence and let our brothers live in peace," Ampatuan said.

Hanie Ilano, provincial administrator, also appealed to MILF leaders to refrain from engaging militiamen in armed confrontations in the guise of solving family feuds (rido).

"Just imagine how difficult it is to fast ... with your belongings during (the) hectic

AMPATUAN

march," he said.

At least 3,000 individuals were displaced in the towns of Mamasapano, Datu Unsay and Datu Saudi when MILF rebels clashed with soldiers and militia on Sept. 29.

"Some of the evacuees have returned home, others refuse (to) unless they are assured (of peace)," Ilano said.

The MILF leaders pledge denied to allegations the offensive initiated by the MILF's 109th brigade in Barangay Nabundas that they left six persons wounded, including three children.

The skirmishes stopped when members of the cessation panel and the Malaysian-led International Monitoring Team intervened.

But according to Col. Jerry Jalandoni, 601st Army brigade commander, MILF rebels continued harassing their Maguindanao villagers by denying off their livestock.

"They're messing up in the desired villages, provoking evacuees from returning home," he said.

Maj. Gen. Raul Relloso, 6th Infantry Division chief, assured that the Army would launch offensives if the rebels refused to leave the desired barangays.

He gave no deadline but stressed that the massing of MILF guerrillas is a violation of the agreements on the cessation of hostilities. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

RETURN OF THE NATIVE Some 300 Filipino migrants in Sabah are returning to their native land through the Zamboanga City port amid the continuing problem of unemployment in the province. The women in this group of more than 300 Filipino migrants in Sabah who were deported by the Malaysian government.

Special polls yield no execs in N. Samar town

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

CATARMAN, Northern Samar—A coastal town in Northern Samar is still without any elected officials after the Commission on Elections (Comelec) failed to proclaim the winners following Saturday's special elections.

Atty. Ed Mendoza, Comelec director for Eastern Visayas, said the Municipal Board of Canvassers (MBC) encountered "some technicalities" that stalled the proclamation of winning candidates in Silvino Lubos town.

He, however, confirmed to electricity these controversies. "But we hope to proclaim the winners the soonest (as) possible time," he told the reporters.

Mendoza, however, said the MBC members had asked the Comelec central office to canvass votes in Catarman for practical reasons.

He said it would be easier for them to communicate with their central office if the canvassing was held in Catarman, instead in Silvino Lubos.

Silvino Lubos is a coastal town that can be reached by a seven-hour boat ride from Catarman, Northern Samar. It has 26 barangays with a total voting population of 8,341.

Special elections were held last Saturday in Barangays Imelda and Guinsan, which would have paved the way for the proclamation of winning candidates for mayor, vice mayor and eight members of the municipal board.

The town remains the only one without elected officials in Eastern Visayas and is being run by a caretaker. Felipe Rodriguez, Department of Interior and Local Government field operations chief in Silvino Lubos.

The special elections stemmed from the Oct. 12 directive of the Comelec in Manila that declared a failure of elections in Imelda and Guinsan on May 10.

The Comelec said no elections was held in Barangay Imelda during the regular elections after the Board of Election Inspectors did not report to the precincts.

In the case of Guinsan, the Comelec said armed men believed to be members of the New People's Army snatched ballot boxes and election paraphernalia.

Imelda has 314 registered voters and Guinsan, 373 or a combined voting population of 279.

The municipal mess is being contested by Noel Justo of the Liberal Party and Gabriel Basante of the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats.

Mine firm seeks to 'make difference'

DAVAO CITY—Small-scale mining companies in the country need to be sensitized for extracting resources without too much regard for the environment.

But the Philippa Mining Corp. (PMC) in Barangay Aguasan del Sur wants to make a difference, a company official said yesterday.

Samuel Abdul, PMC president, said they were constantly in touch with the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) to ensure that their operations would not mean irreversible damage to the environment.

Abdul said PMC has also embarked on a wide-scale tree-planting activity in its bid to reforest its area of operation.

He said PMC also established a social arm, the Montanosa Philanga Foundation Inc. (MPFI), which is currently working with local government units in Agusan del Sur for the establishment of a nursery project to help PMC in its reforestation program.

Abdul said the MPFI also helped provide the community with three basic needs, including access to safe drinking water.

"The foundation has rehabilitated some open-pit in various barangays, and installed chlorination systems," Abdul said.

He said that to date, around 3,000 families in Manaven already benefited from the MPFI's community service. *PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Calabarzon recruits 350 more policemen

CAMP TIRONTIN LIM, Laguna—Amid threats of increased attacks from communist rebels and other armed groups, the Calabarzon police yesterday disclosed the recruitment of 350 new police officers.

Chief Supt. Reynaldo Varilla, Calabarzon police director, said the new recruits, including 47 female officers, would be deployed to the provincial police offices in Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon.

Varilla said the latest batch of officers had already been serious in to duty and would undergo six months of intensive training in Camp Nestor in Lucena City.

"It's no easy to be a policeman," Varilla said.

He said the regional police plans to recruit more most. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ENTERTAINMENT Metro

E-mail at entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Louie C. Camino
Assistant Editor Bonnie S. Velarde

Text us your feedback: Inquirer are served by Globe or SKY Direct

Richer in experience and richer by ₱1M

By Teresa Perez
Contributor

WHEN my agent first told me about "Trip Kita," the reality game show launched by ABS-CBN and Colgate Fresh Confidence, I was (un)predictably unimpressed. No, I was giddy with enthusiasm.

I told my mom: "Imagine, you get to see the best summer destinations in the Philippines, all expenses paid. And if you are lucky, you can even bring home P1 million in cash!"

It was a no brainer, since I had fast lots of objections in VTOs and go-sees. Still, I was inexplicably nervous during the auditions... maybe because I genuinely wanted to make it to the top 35. At the time, I was just hoping to learn from and savor the sights. I was free, too. As unwavering morning-after-boozers, I was not required to take summer classes.

When I did make it and we started taping the show, I became all the more engrossed in the whole adventure. I left our house as a 17-year-old girl. When I came home after six weeks on the road, I was an 18-year-old woman, P1-million richer. More important, I was richer, too, in terms of experience.

IT GOING ON. The author joined the reality game show when she was 17 and came out a winner at 18.

THE REAL Ray Charles

THE REEL Ray Charles

Realizations

In fact, I spent the first few hours of my birthday in a ferry boat in the middle of the sea, on our way back to Manila from Puerto Galera in Mindoro. By that time I had discovered countless things about myself. I can be strong despite my being petite and fragile-looking. I am not the type to give up easily. I am no quitter. Though exhausted and emaciated, I will still prove so.

I had become friendlier and more open to people. After going through the wringer in one piece, I had also become more patient, more understanding, and less judgmental.

Having 11 destinations made me love Mother Nature more. I became more concerned that we were lucky to live in the Philippines. For me, the most beautiful spot was Isla Bel, where my partner Rosa Cardeo and I were asked to put together a mask novel dive.

Of course I was excited to see the Chocolate Hills—I had seen them only on postcards and in books. Of course I was thrilled to hold a cobra in my hand. What cute and gentle creatures! I had begged the caretakers for the privilege; it was a once-in-a-lifetime gift.

Ouch!

And then we met our little accident in the bicycle race. My fellow contestants Gretchen Fullido and I were having fun cycling on the beach. Soon enough, we were going too fast. We panicked, lost our balance, and fell among the sharp rocks. We were home carrying the bike: our legs bloody.

This could have defeated other girls, but not me. In fact, it pushed me all the more to do my best in the next challenges.

Another draining leg was the Boracay tour. We had to finish six stations, and at one of those we were asked to eat raw squid, raw oyster, and raw shrimp. I am definitely not a seafood kind of girl. (Ikki-ayo kasi! Grumbling but still and persuasive content. There again, we didn't have any choice.

But at least the Boracay "feast" were familiar stuff. What we had to sample in Palawan made my stomach turn 180 degrees. It was my first time ever to eat uncooked rice sardines and mudfish, or live worms! The sea urchins looked palatable— think of the yolk in the latter, but the crushed rice another story all together.

The director kept reassuring me that I could do it, that it was just like eating spaghetti. I was almost convinced, and then the poor little (make that tiny) wriggling in my mouth! In this dog where my gal pals ask how I survived the "Fear Factor" like stints, I tell them I just kept drinking water between bites.

Thanks, Boss

I also have boss to thank. He's the boss! He's a perfect gentleman, as nice and kind. At our Gretchen and I met that little accident, I found it difficult to walk or even just stand on my feet. You know what boss did? He carried me all the way back to camp! He ignored his own exhaustion. He is on top of my list.

Aside from him, I'm grateful to a whole lot of other people. That's why I plan to use part of my cash prize to give back. My mom and I plan to make a donation to our church in Quiapo. I'd also like to buy my mom a new car.

Most of my winnings, however, I will save for future use, like my studies. I want to fulfill a promise I gave my dad that I would file a divorce someday. That once impossible dream is finally within reach.

Wasn't that a great way to spend summer vacation?

WITH CO-WINNER Marvin Su, a fellow new millionaire

8 KEYS TO YOUR DIFFERENT INTERESTS

Only from PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

RP not out of woods yet–De Venecia

From page A1

tickle the fiscal crisis.

De Venecia indicated that the fiscal crisis would persist unless the measures under the Expanded Value-Added Tax (E-VAT) system and stricter revenue measures, including a bill imposing taxes on tobacco and alcohol products, before the end of the year.

"If the six taxes and structures of Ople-Arroyo measures are approved before Christmas and become class and then effectively begins on Jan. 1 or 15, ... then I agree that we will be out of the woods," he said at a press forum at the Manila Hotel.

Lanzadera noted that Mr. Arroyo's declaration that the fiscal crisis was over was premature.

Far from over

He said the fiscal crisis was "far from over" now that "it will come sooner rather than later."

The President told media executives on Thursday that the government was not assuming the crisis from fiscal spillage into one for "keeps" or even "prolonged" one.

"I would no longer call it a crisis. The situation is that of a medium-term fight against poverty and to grow our economy," she said.

In Malacañang, Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said it was "baseless" for the group of lawmakers to claim that Mr. Arroyo was slackening in her resolve to address the fiscal situation.

Neri said the fiscal reform measures proposed by Lanzadera were "too harsh and did not address the ability of most Filipinos to shoulder more taxes.

Lanzadera and four other former finance secretaries—Alfonso Cuenco, Jesus del Rosario Jr., Edgardo Leong and Jose Isidro Camacho—and ex-Central Bank Governor Jose Cuisia came up with an open letter Sunday on urging the President and leaders of Congress to take more drastic measures to address the deepening fiscal crisis.

3 measures

Lanzadera has proposed the adoption of three new measures—restoring the specific excise taxes on oil products to the 1997 levels and providing information to raise at least P25 billion); raising the value-added tax rate by 3 percent and imposing countervailing import surcharge of 3 percent (to raise P45 billion and P40 billion, respectively), and withholding 10 percent of the internal revenue allotment to local government units to raise P35 billion).

He insisted that these measures be in place before the year ends and that these be on top of the measures recommended by 11 professors from the University of the Philippines School of Economics.

In a television interview, Lanzadera said the President had not yet done anything since she made the "bold move" of submitting the country now in the middle of a fiscal crisis three months ago.

In a phone interview, Neri said Lanzadera's proposals had been considered in the President's fiscal strategy, such as the import surcharge, oil tax, and collection of taxes but government planners also considered the capacity of Filipinos to absorb more taxes in the face of rising prices of oil and other commodities.

Bad for body

Neri said that this was the reason the government had chosen to collect debt or investment those measures.

"Too much medicine can be bad for the body. We cannot impose all these measures in one blow because it would be too much of a shock to the public and that it would even backfire because it would pull down the economy into a recession," he said.

"We hope to come up with a right mix and I think the President has done a nice job of striking a balance of what the government needs and what the public can afford."

In the case of the BIA, Press Assistant Communications Director Silvestre Afable said the GCIA had agreed to the government's proposal to defer the minimum annual increase in their BIA to help ease the fiscal crisis.

"They are willing to take this Arbitrator while trying to influence the legislative process to limit trunk the revenue programs of the President," Afable said.

A matter of attitude

In a phone interview, Afable said the President's recent statement on the fiscal situation was just a matter of taking the right attitude in solving a very serious problem.

"Everybody agrees that we have a serious problem, but it's just a matter of attitude. The President is not denying we have problem but we must approach it with optimism and hope because the steps in solving the problem has been evidenced in the responses of Congress, government, and the business sector," Afable said.

He stressed that the President was not being "overly optimistic" when she announced that the worst was over for the country.

"She just feels that we should have optimism and hope for this country now because there is already light at the end of the tunnel," Afable said.

"Gifts monster" Faye Go-Jose

Despite doubts, 12-yr-old girl keeps faith in RP

From page A1

she reviewed her mom's materials and simplified the thesis to two-sixth grade level.

The result, she said, was that it won "Best Thesis in Physics and Science" and the Philippines was one of seven dozen countries—the other being Japan—among 30 teams qualified to compete in Brisbane.

To prepare for the competition, Faye said, she rationed her usual six hours of study every day to almost eight hours.

But the organizers of the competition did not provide her and accommodation, so mother and daughter knocked on generous others to seek financial help for their travel expenses.

Their appeal fell on deaf ears. Cathy said she decided to use her savings and sought help from her family in the United States, and members of the Bread of Life Christian Fellowship in Valenzuela City where she and Faye go to church.

Bad samaritan

With their tickets, traditional attire and $500 in pocket money, mother and daughter took the flight to Sydney on Sept. 17 to receive a trophy and $2,000 cash prize for Faye's theory. The two enjoyed a day touring the Australian city for the first time.

"It's quite shoes," Cathy recalls, laughing like her daughter. But a single mother and nursing students, being able to afford a nice pair of shoes was a welcome treat.

The next day, they flew to Brisbane.

That was where an unusual—if not startling—series of events drama occurred, by their accounts.

On the plane, they said, they met a friendly, 41-year-old Sonia Simangan, who engaged them in conversation. Cathy confided to the stranger, "who seemed kind," that they could not afford the hotel recommended by the organizers because it was too expensive.

Emily volunteered to help them find cheap accommodations and brought them to the Good Earth diner.

While Cathy paid for a night's stay, Simangan had gone through her body bag, which contained their passports, tickets and other important documents, along with the remaining $250 in pocket money.

Faye said she left asleep while scanning for her mother in the lobby. She woke up minutes later without the bag. Hotel guards later told them they noticed Emily with the bag but did not suspect anything because they thought they came together.

Shoes for food

Cathy asked the lady if was Filipino officials in Australia. Oddly enough, the officials there were reportedly not familiar with Faye.

"We looked ourselves in the room and prayed. We did not even pray for food to eat. We simply asked that we could return to the Philippines with dignity," Cathy recounted.

The next day, Faye ate the shoes she bought from Sydney, as well as their suits and women clothes that brought with them. Hope had intended on bringing warm clothes because she thought they would see winter, and she prepared days for supplements set on to sell those belongings.

The Philippine Consulate in Brisbane helped them with their travel documents, and Cathy was able to borrow $200 to pay for their hotel.

After hours of walking, they found a boutique that was willing to buy the shoes and clothes. They were paid A$1200, which they spent for food for the night.

Because they only had money for a night's stay at the hotel, Cathy and Faye checked out the following day leaving their luggage as deposit and sidewalk vendors for transportation. They decided to walk 3 kilometers to the competition venue in traditional Filipino costume.

When they finally arrived at Griffith Hall, they said they found that they were required to memorize their books, from where they would be answering questions during the quiz bee.

No cheering squad

With no one to help them, mother and daughter proceeded to decorate the booth. They said they decided to use the extra A$1,000 and the prize money they had brought—a colorful making and an Igorot costume—to decorate their space.

The Philippines' booth was recognized as the "Most Creative Booth" by the organizers, they said.

During the contest proper, Cathy said she was surprised to discover that contestants from other countries were accompanied by a band and a cheering squad. They didn't even have a flag, she said.

Nevertheless, Faye said she refused to be demoralized.

"I did not allow myself to be discouraged during the quiz. I really gave it my best because I knew this was the only way we can go home. We needed the cash prize to buy tickets," she said.

At stake were A$15,000 and the thicker question was: "Identify the four passionate enzymes that aid in digestion and explain their uses."

Faye said that fortunately she had studied the thesis her mom's reviewer on nursing school. She got a good spanking for bringing the book to her school just when Cathy needed it to study for her exam test, but in the end, the books all the difference. Faye said that she was the only contestant who gave a complete answer to the question.

Faye said Germany came in second and the United States came in third.

A Japanese woman—name up to Cathy and asked: "Why are you crying? You're wow!" Japan had shouted for the Philippines when its representative was eliminated.

Cathy narrated that proclamation to the woman, who gave her the number of the Japanese Embassy. Faye said she skipped the awarding ceremony to the end and her mother had to call the Japanese Embassy for assistance.

Before long, they had a temporary roof to pass until visitors to go back home.

Faye says she was taught by her parents and ministers in church to always do her best for God and country. As a result, she is the valedictorian of her class in Valenzuela, shares with other children the value of education and a balanced social and academic calendar.

"I always try to maintain in her the importance of education. I want her to grow up well," Cathy says.

She and her husband, who is very close to Faye, separated a year ago, her father had falsely claimed he was single when he married Cathy. But after he found out the truth, she decided to raise her daughter alone.

Because Faye had investigate as a baby, Cathy became overprotective and kept her daughter at home. She brought books and reading materials. At 3, Faye had already memorized "Twinkle, twinkle" from her mom's frequent readings.

From her kindergarten days, Faye had joined all sorts of competitions—from singing contests in school to Bibliobowl at the Bread of Life Christian Fellowship. Following Bedtime in Bedroom where she emerged in the Top Five.

The 40th grader who wants to be a lawyer is a fan of Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" trilogy and loves everything by C.S. Lewis. She is the youngest member of the Bread of Life praise and worship team to church and plays the violin.

Up until last year, when she suffered an injury, Faye was also competing in the Metro Manila Taekwondo Open.

"I want to try everything. I don't want people to say that I'm good only at one thing. I want to be a well-rounded person," she says.

NIKOLE Garcia, a Grade 1 pupil at the Cainta Elementary School, presents to her mother Melanie a kite of rice given to her by President Arroyo.

Gov't starts rice rations through kids in schools

From page A1

Asked by reporters in question if her father had a job, the girl said, "Wala po (None)." Then she began to sob.

The rice-for-school project, dubbed Food for Work, which will hand out food coupons to poor families in exchange for community services, will be launched on Nov. 15 in Caloocan City, Eastern Samar, Zamboanga Sibugay, Maguindanao and Sulu.

The food coupon could be exchanged for rice, sugar, milk, eggs and other grocery items.

Dominic Blanquiguan Anyayahan and Roman had the assigned distribution of rice at De Castro Elementary School in Bicol, one of the 100 schools targeted because it posted high malnutrition and child dropout rates among Grades 1 and 2 pupils.

Target areas

Other selected schools are in the depressed areas of Navotas, Quezon City, Tondo and Smokey in Manila, in Caloocan City; and in some towns of Bicol, Bukidnon and Cavite.

Starting tomorrow and until the last week ended four visits on March 28, 2005, Grade 1 and 2 pupils in the covered schools will each be bringing home a kilo of rice each day that they attend class, the Arroyo told reporters.

The rice bags were to be distributed in dismissal time.

Absentees will forfeit their take-home packs, she said.

The children will then be carrying that extra load home to their parents, according to DSWD ministers.

Hunger not widespread

Addressing school-children, teachers and parents at the packed CES auditorium, Soliman downplayed the SWS survey and sought to "correct" perceptions of widespread hunger "that the said media report had generated.

She stressed that only 15 percent of the survey "respondents"—and not the entire Philippine population—reported to have experienced hunger in the last three months when polled by the SWS.

Some 100 tonnes of rice were arranged in the sandbags in front of the stage.

According to the program, Mr. Arroyo was also supposed to deliver a message. She promised that the handover of rice bags to some schoolchildren and then left without addressing the crowd.

Chosen one

When asked why he thought his area was picked for the program, Caloca Mayor Ramon Bagatsing said his municipality had placed 11th overall in the national performance out of Bicol's 14 local government units.

Also, at least 30 percent of Caloocan's population of 1,400,000 considered poor, he said.

Soliman said the use subsidy would actually just "supplement" the government's existing free feeding program in public schools. Only this time, not only the pupils but their other family members—especially younger siblings—will get to eat more, she said.

Recto's idea

The DSWD is expected to spend around P80 to P90 million for food for School, the funds coming from the department's own budget and the Office of the President.

When PAPE reported that the incidence of hunger had increased in many parts of the country, the government initially announced it was preparing to give P1,200 monthly "food coupons" to some five million poor families.

The package was later modified to encourage poor families to send their children to school in exchange for the food subsidy, an idea proposed by Sen. Ralph Recto.

Mystery bulge in Bush suit jacket explained

From page A1

was visible during the three debates?

In an effort to find out, it seemed like a good idea to drop in on newspaper in Paris, the long-time presidential tailor who got himself into the bulge mystery when White House officials outlined how he allegedly failed to do his job.

Some have insisted that the bulge was the outline of a radio receiver that got shoved accidentally into a stuffing pocket and unnoticed there into a hidden presidential surprise. But Mr. Arpe H. Cecil Jr., the White House chief of staff, dismissed the bulge as "a poorly tailored suit."

Ken McMahan, the Bush campaign manager, went further and said on NBC's "Meet the Press" that "the gentleman responsible for the tailoring of that suit was no longer working for the administration."

In fact, De Paris is still making suits for Bush, and he was not at all happy to have lost decades of business. So last June, the tailor in navy pinstripe store Lyndon B. Johnson—called into question.

"Well, I don't feel, but I cannot do anything," De Paris said in an interview on Friday in his shop on 58th and 6 streets, just three blocks from the White House.

De Paris, 76, had been visited a few weeks earlier by The Hill, a weekly newspaper that covers Congress. The tailor told the reporter according to other bulge reports, that the presidential suit was nothing more than a natural pucker that occurs when a man's jacket is pulled taut against his back.

The interest quickly dowsed De Paris' suspicion sensitive, and he had The Hill.

Giving answers to the Secret Service, The Hill reported that the bulge was the outline of a hidden pocket vest.

The White House had earlier denied that it was, and stuck to that statement on Friday. A spokesperson for the Secret Service, Tom Moore, also had no further light.

"I can't comment on our protective measures," Moore said.

But De Paris, for one, now believes the bulge was a bullet-proof vest. At the least, a bullet-proof vest would have been more supposedly last week off the hook. The New York Times

Times Service

NBI findings on airport tower siege out soon

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation is expected to come out this week with its final report on the takeover of the air control tower at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport 2 that took place on Nov. 4 last year.

"We are set to meet this week to complete the report," said an agent privy to the case, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The NBI stepped into the probe upon the request of the family of former Air Transportation Office chief Basilio Hilario Jr., leader of the siege.

Hilario and his aide Harry Li. Rosario Castrillon were killed in a hail of bullets as members of the Special Weapons and Tactics team stormed the air control tower.

The assurance from the NBI came as Villarosa's wife Marissa, called for justice for her husband during a radio interview yesterday.

The family earlier handed the account on Villarosa and Castrillon as an overkill, especially since the attack came while Villarosa and he would surrender, during a phone interview aired live over radio station dzBB.

Marissa also said in a dzBB interview yesterday that she is still not over the incident and does not even want to listen to the radio interview that took place describing the last minutes of her husband's life.

"It gives me nightmares up to now," she said.

She also said her husband was a "very patriotic" man who offered his life to expose corruption in the country.

During his takeover of the air control tower, Villarosa said he was very disappointed about rampant corruption in the government.

With, Villarosa also said that they are anxiously waiting for the results of the NBI probe.

An NBI investigator privy to the matter yesterday said the first draft of the final report contained recommendations to prosecute certain parties, values he refused to identify.

But the investigator added that the report is still subject to change. The source also said that the probe took several months because the investigators had to weigh not just the evidence gathered, but the intent of Hilario and Castrillon. "The state has the right to protect its own interests," the agent said.

Janitor finds bomb in Cainta mall

By Luige A. del Puerto

ARTILLERIES found a hand grenade yesterday morning at the Eva Lavin Hall in Cainta, Rizal, three hours before Presidente Macapagal-Arroyo visited the Cainta Elementary School for the launching of the government's food-for-school program.

The school is a few kilometers away from the mall.

The bomb, a 60-mm mortar, was discovered in an open parking area at around 6:30 a.m. Monday, according to Lt. Supt. Leocadio Santiago, chief of the Rizal police.

A janitor found it while sweeping the parking lot.

But Santiago said the bomb was not intended to explode. In order for it to do so, it would have to be dropped, harnessed or armed.

"It no longer had a pin, but there was no electrical fuse or firing device. It was not intended to be exploded," Santiago said, apparently in an effort to calm down.

He said no one had called to make a threat, so to take responsibility for leaving it in the area.

The casualty happens when the person or group responsible wants to make a political statement, Santiago added.

The police chief said there was no attempt to hide the bomb. It was wrapped in paper, but was easily visible.

An explosive and ordnance unit had been dispatched to retrieve the bomb.

And, if explored, it could have affected areas up to 20 meters away from the blast, explosives experts said.

METROBRIEFS

Health care confab

THE PHILIPPINE Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health Care (PITAHC), of the Department of Health, in collaboration with the Philippine College for the Advancement of Medicine (PCAM), has mounted health-related activities this November which will focus on proclaiming the merits of traditional and alternative health care. The first event is PCAM's 19th National Convention on Alternative and Natural Healing Medicine with the theme "The Power of Natural Healing" to be held on Nov. 11-14 at Taal Vista Hotel. Key-note speaker is Health Secretary Manuel M. Dayrit, with renowned medical experts from the United States, India, Malaysia, Vietnam and the Philippines as alternate speakers. A two-day workshop is also set on Nov. 10-11 at the Philippine Physical Therapy Association in Manila. Dr. Aurora P. Cayetano will conduct a workshop on "How to Use Kinesio Taping" on this day. For particulars, please contact PCAM at tel. nos. 411-0408, 373-2141 or 8921-3481; Dr. Cayetano at tel. 411-0408, 373-2141 or 8921-3481; Dr. Evelyn Merced at 921-3481 or 0917-888-8208; or Janice F. De Castro, at 926-2980 or 0921-329-6408.

R. Saraclan, 40

FUNERAL for Saraclan, brother of ABS-CBN News Channel news director Joel Saraclan, died Saturday night at the Philippine General Hospital due to multi-organ failure resulting from hypertrophy cardiomyopathy. He was 40 years old. His remains were first visited at the Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in Barangay Pansy City. He will be interred Saturday at the Pansy City Public Cemetery. He is survived by his mother, Lydia; brothers Joel, Bernardo, Isidoro and Oboel; sister Sarah; wife Rosella; and children Christine Bonna, Paige Jan, Andrea Angelica and John Theodore.

Pay taxes, or billboards go down

BAYSIDE FANS
Al baby takes in the morning sunshine a senior citizen tones his muscles along the Manila Baywalk, a popular destination for young and old alike.
MARK NAVALES

By Tina G. Santos

THE QUEZON City government has threatened to tear down all advertising billboards and signages installed along major roads and thoroughfares in the city if the advertising agencies that put them there fail to settle their tax obligations to the local government.

City Treasurer Victor Endriga said there are about 82 ad agencies in the city that had not been paying their taxes since 1993.

An example he cited was United Neon Advertising, that reportedly owns about 20 billboard displays installed mainly along Edsa, Banawang, Quezon Avenue, Commonwealth Avenue, Cubao and Balintawak.

The city government intends to collect millions of pesos from these ad agencies that had not paid business taxes or income from contracts for outdoor ads, particularly billboards.

Mayor Feliciano Belmonte said ad agencies have been enjoying tremendous earnings without properly giving the city government its due share.

"Since the passage of the Quezon City Revenue Code in 1993, these agencies have continued to be remiss in paying their taxes to the city government despite the fact that the city's business and real estate tax rates remain the lowest among the local governments units in Metro Manila," Belmonte said.

Under the city's Revenue Code, ad agencies are supposed to pay 50 percent more in the income derived from outdoor advertising contracts with their clients.

Endriga explained that 100 percent of the ad agencies' income from these contracts are taxable at the rate of 70 percent of their gross income, in the municipality or city where their billboard is located, and 30 percent of their gross income to the municipality or city where their principal office is located.

Ad agencies collect a minimum of P100,000 and as much as P1 million monthly for every billboard or advertising display installed, mostly along Edsa, sources said.

Belmonte has already directed Endriga to submit a list of the ad agencies that owe the billboards so the city government can notify them of their tax obligations.

But Endriga stressed that all actions by the city government against erring ad agencies would not be done undertaken without giving due process.

Suspect seeks preliminary probe

By Tarra V. Quismundo

JOSE Feliciardo, now under detention for allegedly being one of the gunmen in the slay of Barangay Police District Station 8 chief, Supt. Marcelo Martinez, has asked a Manila court to bring his case back to the City Prosecutor's Office for a preliminary investigation.

Through defense lawyer Reynaldo Bagsunog of the Xalapat Legal Action Center, Feliciardo filed a motion seeking Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 49 Judge Zenaida Dinguna to defer trial and remand the case to an investigating prosecutor.

"The accused hereby asserts that a preliminary investigation he first conducted to determine whether there exists probable cause to hold him liable for the offenses," said Bagsunog, in a motion dated Nov. 4.

The lawyer added that his client was entitled to a preliminary investigation as a matter of right, even while he had undergone inquest proceedings. Cases that automatically go through the preliminary investigation are those filed through complaint affidavits, where those charged are not yet in police custody.

A preliminary investigation would allow Feliciardo to submit evidence in his defense for Martinez's slay, and for the wounding of Police Officer 1 Cesando Cevilleno and bystander Janette Otan, who were hit by stray bullets during the Martinez shooting.

Feliciardo had been indicted for murder and two counts of frustrated murder through inquest proceedings following his arrest, after inquest prosecutors said they had enough evidence to file charges filed against him.

Makati vice mayor's gambling vice

ON TARGET
ELMAR JAGO

WHEN cohorts didn't come out harboring ill-feelings for scores before the incumbent's. Nunez and Lopez are now in hiding, but they will be caught. They will be charged with rape, an offense punishable by death.

* * *

The Cantonbuenas should make a libation cheer on Makati Vice Mayor Ernesto Mercado for finally giving the long-awaited justice to their daughter. Mercado has been losing heavily at the casino at the Heritage Hotel on Roxas Boulevard. Pasay City Casino Authority estimate that in October alone, the vice mayor of the country's premiere resort lost P11 million.

Mercado came to the casino eight times last month and lost the big amount. That excludes the months previous when he also was known to frequent the casino, one of his housemen complained Mercado hasn't paid his gambling loans amounting to several million. Where did Mercado get all that money?

* * *

I am not defending Col. William Ye, former chief of the Army's Fort Bonifacio General Hospital, but the charge that he used expired medicines on soldier-patients will not hold water.

Why? Because, first, it was not Ye who bought the medicines. Those were donated by a drug company to the Army months before their expiration dates. Second, even if the patients were administered the expired drugs, no harm would have come to them. Medicines are efficacious six months after their expiration date; after six months, medicines become 20 percent less effective, and then 50 percent less effective after a year.

Why do I know this? I was a beneficiary of drug salesmen before.

New cell for bombing suspects

By Tarra V. Quismundo

TWO SUSPECTS linked by police to the Light Rail Transit bombing four years ago would soon be reunited with their alleged accomplice.

Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 29 Judge Clarito Gozila has granted a motion seeking to transfer Abdulhalim Pasig and Mansueto Saga to the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) in Camp Bagong Diwa, Bicutan, Taguig.

Finding the motion meritorious and there being no objection by the prosecution, the court hereby resolves to grant the said motion," Gozila said in her order dated Nov. 3 but released yesterday.

Once transferred, the two would be joining Sultan accused Abadia Hadji Yunos, who had also ordered to serve a plea to the charges of multiple murder, attempted frustrated murder and multiple attempted murder filed against them by their alleged involvement in the Dec. 30 bombing.

The suspects had been temporarily under the watch of the Philippine National Police Custodial Center at the PNP Headquarters in Camp Crame, Quezon City upon Gozila's order, pending her ruling on the motion for transfer filed by defense lawyer Abdulhayan Seding-Hadji.

Naga, after Jailed Bilis, and Perez, alias Abdurasul Amir, were arrested in Masaya City on Aug. 2. The two were detained at Fort Bonifacio and then eventually transferred to Camp Crame while on trial.

State prosecutor Peter Ong had said that putting the three suspected bombers together in one facility could be risky since almost 126 members of the Abu Sayyaf Group and other members of the Moro National Liberation Front were also detained at the BJMP.

METRO

End of road for man with many aliases

By Nancy Carvajal

TOUGH luck.

It could be the end of a profitable career for an alleged cell phone thief when he was apprehended by barangay officials yesterday in Mandaluyong.

Accompanied by famous females and two Ann Texts, two mental law experts who said they had lost their cell phones to a robber in Pasay City, barangay officials traced Michael Gil Glenn Santos-Ilao to his new address at Ledesco Street in Barangay Ibo, Wilo, Tolentino.

"We were able to find the suspect through information given by other victims," Bernales said. A phone caller had tipped him off about the suspect's whereabouts, he added.

According to Southern Police District Chief Wilfredo Garcia, Bernales, Texts and the barangay officials first brought the suspect to the Pasay City police headquarters. Garcia added that complainants trooped to the area after they learned about the suspect's arrest. "The suspect's modus operandi was to befriend students living in dormitories and boarding houses," the SPD chief said. The suspect moved from one place to another after every crime, he added.

According to the complainants, the suspect had used different names in each place where he operated. In Mandaluyo, he was Mark Gil Glenn Aguilas. He used the name Mark Gil Quilatan Sarcenilla in Pasay City and was known as Mark Gil Delight de Guzman in Las Piñas, the complainants added.

While the other victims were downtrodden by the charges against the suspect, some just wanted their cell phones back. Pasay City police chief Reynaldo Ferrazo said the suspect would face robbery and estafa charges.

Alarm gives bank robbers away

By Tina G. Santos

THREE men who attempted to rob a bank in Quezon City early yesterday morning went home empty-handed after the bank's alarm went off.

Investigators at the Central Police District Criminal Investigation Unit said the suspects, allegedly members of the notorious Scorpion Gang, barged into an Allied Bank branch at the corner of Tennessee and E. Rodriguez Avenues at around 5 a.m.

Police said the suspects had used the bank's back door to let themselves in. Apparently the lone security guard Rolando Pelmas had opened the door after hearing a knock. The suspects immediately pulled a gun at Pelmas and then proceeded to tie him up.

The suspects tried to open the vault, using an aeroplane knife, police added. However, the bank's alarm suddenly went off, causing them to panic and immediately leave aboard a getaway vehicle, an L300 van.

Police said they are still tracking down the suspects, and added that they were not discounting the possibility that the attempted robbery was an inside job.

SPORTS

Don't miss your favorite TV shows! Check out today's Inquirer TV Guide on the Entertainment section

Phone Pals test FedEx in Ormoc

GINEBRA'S Migs Mobile launches a hook shot over RedDuff's Enrico Villanueva in Sunday night's encounter

FOR TALK 'N Text, life has not been that hard with Jayson Ian Tan-Leva.

Playing for the fifth straight game without three cornerstones, the Phone Pals hope to outpoint third-feeding Gino Marcelino PBA Philippine Cup clash today against FedEx in a road game at the Superdome in Ormoc.

TNT will try to win for the fourth time even with a gaping hole in the middle at their 4-1 clash with an Express crew that is seeking a third straight win.

"We got hurt on mark after winning overwhelmingly against Shell, but it doesn't mean we can relax against FedEx," said coach Joel Banal, whose Phone Pals are at 4-1, their only loss coming at the hands of Coffex.

"After that loss to Coffex, they [players] seemed to come back and prove something," added Banal. "Without Asi, everybody needs to step up big."

Tan-Leva has been suspended by the PBA following a recent Department of Justice ruling that he faked his Filipino citizenship papers. Only a TRO he had secured last year keeps the Bureau of Immigration from deporting him to the

Banal knows the folly of rash

greenwich

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL RESUMED LAST WEEKEND

Miriam, CSJ D'Tofu, Assumption, Rizal and Grace Christian post 2nd win

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENT

TEAM STANDINGS

GVIT

AiA ASIA INTERNATIONAL AUCTIONEERS, INC.

"NO-MINIMUM-PRICE" PUBLIC AUCTION

TRUCKS & EQUIPMENT

NOVEMBER 19, 20 & 21, 2004

(Friday, Saturday & Sunday)

Inspection Dates: Nov. 16, 17 & 18 • Sale Starts at 8:00 A.M.

HOME OF QUALITY MACHINES IN ASIA

ALL MUST GO! • AUCTION STYLE! PARADE

LOWER MAU CAMP, ARGONAUT HI-WAY
SUBIC BAY FREEPORT ZONE, PHILIPPINES
Telephone: (63-47) 252-3333 / 252-7830 / 252-6801
Fax: (63-47) 252-6880 / 252-1407
E-Mail: asiaic@pobox.com

Terms & Conditions Financing available from:
BPI/MS METRO Leasing & Finance Corp. Tel. (02) 556-4000

Chesser Camacho prevails anew, gains solo third

By Roy Luarca

GRETE, Greece—Chesser Chevalier Camacho showed what a white belt can do on the chess board here Sunday.

Sarting 12th seed Diana Boris of Romania into her pet Francesca opening, Camacho prevailed in just 24 moves and gained solo third place in the girls' under-10 division of the 13th WAGI Youth Chess Championships at the Lyceo Maria Auxiliadora Heraklio.

Her fourth win gave Camacho 4.5 points in five games, just half a point off Indian Priya Mohana and Georgian Shannon Vida Maria Mary Avendaño as she took over from Wesley So in spearheading Team Philippines in the five-division tournament.

Under time trouble, So nibbled to second seed PM Ilka Italiali of Azerbaijan in 58 moves of a King's Indian defense to set up an out-straight loss after cruising to three victories in the boys' under-12. So encountered an 1800-1900 player, two points away from perfect. Her point scorers: Julian Jossuah of Germany and Sutirtarajan of India.

While So played, Camacho secured top or her being stalled by a draw in the final round by China's Haohua Jin, who also has 4.5 points.

Camacho, a fifth grader at Ateneo de School of Science, Arts, Technology and Trade, was on the verge of capturing Team's queen when her rival resigned.

Camacho, the Asian Youth girls 10-under champion from Cebu, La Salcedo, who is ranked 30th best, will be handling black against ninth ranked Miss Anabilia of Georgia in the sixth round at 4:30 p.m. (10:30 p.m. in Manila) on Monday.

The third-seeded Medrana and the No. 4 Andalusia will clash on the top board, giving Camacho the opportunity to obtain the lead.

Also scoring for Team Philippines was Chelsey Lamuel Bernales, who beat Gabillas Hannah Ramirez of Colombia in 32 moves of a Sicilian in the girls' 12-under.

Bernales, also a fifth grader at the D'Bay gos Elementary School in Manila, improved to 3 points. She will meet Spain's Lopiano Laura Jimenez in the sixth round.

So, on the other hand, faces another wealth foe in Singaporean Phil Zheng Yuan Shen Chua. So and Chua drew their game in the Asian Youth 48 last August in Tehran, where they emerged co-champions in the boys' under-12.

Other Philippine results saw Jayrobbie Fronda (girls' under-14), Kimberly Jane Caserenas (girls' under-14) and Jean Carlo Abelo (boys' under-8) draw their matches.

Julius de Ramos (boys' under-14) and Prince-Mark Aquino (boys' under-10) yielded to 2 points.

Montaña, Air Philippines eye top spot

DENNIS Miranda of Magnolia gets ganged up on by two Ginebra Gozon defenders. The Gentlies upset the Wizards, 88-84, last Saturday.

WITH Alex Compton finally filling up the leadership vacuum, Montaña Hardship aims to join idle Granary Gozon at the top when it squares off with solitary Adobe Mobile-Agency in the PBL Open Championship today at the Pasig Sports Center.

"He's really a good leader and an ideal player to follow the rest of the game that Brandon] be appraised to the coaching staff to do him [say]," said team manager Clarence Antonio, adding that the veteran guard has not yet fully recovered from a surgery on his right ankle tendon.

"Barely can you see a player as dedicated as Compton. He'll do everything for the team," added Ignacio.

But before Montaña shoots for its third straight win at 4 p.m., Air Philippines will also aim for a share of the lead against the shifting Granary Ora Lorna at 2 p.m.

The Jewels are coming off a convincing 66-54 win against the Hardgrips, with Jon Dan Salvador and Eric dela Cruz scoring 17 points apiece, and Compton defending with 16 points.

The Eagles will most likely have a tough time against Dan Dan Ilagan by reason by their first win in four outings. Gerardo had handling has been the telling factor in the Eagles' woeful campaign as their opponents are averaging 22.2 points off their turnovers.

Air Philippines, meanwhile, will try to recover from its first franchise loss, a 99-77 rollout against ICTSI Lo Info.

Star Eagles coach Louie Alas noted that the pressure is on his team. "We have to step our shit. The boys are preparing [and] for a tough battle ahead," said Alas.

The Eagles dropped their last two assignments to lopsided fashion 108-84 to Montaña, 87-61 in Magnolia's after winning their opening game.

Jayvee M. Pinto

Diadora netters sweep Pilar; Le Soleil scores

TEAM Diadora-PCH and Le Soleil del Norte-Hillsborough posted continuing winners at the start of the Lhuillier Interclub team tennis event of the Philippine Columbians over the weekend.

Diadora-PCh blanked Pilar Tennis Club, 5-0, while Le Soleil del Norte representing host Hillsborough Tennis Club, 3-2, in the event that officially opened the 22nd PCA Open.

The Mike Mita host Justice pair ajudged PCH's sweep with a victory in the Open 30 division, while Sooyong Soon, also a former national player of the Mita, teamed up with Hanky Lee to win their Open 2 match.

Charlie Silo and Mike Ita completed the win in the 35 over-old leaders and the Oliver Domingo-Albert Chua (40 and above) and Boy Santos-Fred. Ay Gomez team pulled off the shutdown of Pilar.

The team of Ricky Lim Sandejong and Bob Mendiola (50-55 and above), Jackie Domingo and Soorr Bee (55 and above) and Danilo de Torres-Dennis Samson (Open D) eased by Hillsborough.

Other winners were Sarmiento Tennis Club, Hayuli Gonzales Macalalag-ong Tennis Club, and the Cebu Island Sporting Tennis Club.

The team event is presented by Cris Medina "Pabuli" Allen and sponsored by Gilmore Jeuller, Solar Sports, Shakey, Sunday, Sun Valley, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Cel, Little Lawrence, Serengkali Lawrence, Coca-Cola, San Miguel Brewery, Philippine Star, 989-Star, Hi-Media, MVP, Hi-Speed, Mercury Steamship, Inchcape PCI Bank, JVL Restaurant, Cepambuan, Tokyo Group, Burlington and MILS.

Arevalos rule Jungolf League

KITTEN PARK OLD- Mark Anthony Arevalos shot a one-over-par 71 built around four birdies at the Valley Executive course on Sunday to win the overall championship of the Junior Golfers League (Jungolf) Series 1.

The chubby grade-schooler at Sandville Elementary continued to Lee Palao pieced together times of 35-36 to outmarking the low gross for the day while playing in the Class D field by 9 to 10 par rolls.

Anthony beat elder brother Michael for the overall title by one stroke. Michael, a senior at Sandville, settled for the boys' Class A (31-37) trophy after shooting a 74.

The tournament, hosted by television personality and movie actor Vic Sotto for daughter Pauleen Luna-Sotto, was actually turned into a family affair by the Arevalos elder Miguel and Abegail also won their respective divisions.

The 12-year-old Miguel shot an 83 to win the boys' Class C plum by three over Nino Brik Bacubac, while 5-year-old Abegail dominated girls' Class F after an 88.

Then, at big girl round for their next junior session, reformed a 76 and were Class One (17-plus) over Nadia Madrian.

The other winners in the girls' division were Cyra Rodriguez (A-88), Bella Gloria (B-101), Andrea Dimaz (C-79), Pelicia Medalla (E-89) and Bella Sedano (Special Olympics-98). Aside from Arevalos (B-81), Juan Paolo Flores (D-94) from Alexander (E-113) and Aron Quinsen (Special Olympics-100) were the other boys' champions.

Hundred Presidents golf stakes a Camry

By Manong R. Camilo

A BRAND-NEW Toyota Camry will be On hole-in-one prize in the 33rd Hundred Presidents International golf tournament that will see the pro-am format for the first time this Friday, Nov. 12, at the prestigious Tagaytay Midlands Golf and Country Club.

The 3-door vehicle, valued at over P1.7 million and sponsored by Advan Nov Eastern Insurance, can be won with an ace on the 186-yard 16th hole.

Twenty of the country's top golfers

Attractive prizes are up for grabs in the amateur division while the pros will battle it out for the P50,000 champion's purse.

Second place will be worth P20,000 and third place P10,000 to the pro division, while the amateurs will battle it out for expensive golf equipment and appliances on the course and in the nut file.

The tournament, first held in Hacienda in 2002 and Club Intramuros last year, will have one professional joining a threesome of amateurs in a flight.

The four-ball format will be used for some top and for amateurs will be grouped according to their average handicap.

Former Philippine amateur champ Arthur Bernabe, Carlo Villaruz, Benjie Magsalin, Mon's Pauly, Ibrahim Dalisaysay, Cookie Lo'D and Gerald Bondoc are the other notables in the professional field.

Newly-crowned Fortune Open champ Angelo Que was all set to play but got a last-minute for a big-money meet in Thailand this week.

Locals set for bigger ITF tennis showing

PETER of not to shine.

TWO confidence high after emerging world-ranked players but week, Filipino foreigners Aqu Vanessa Pere and Eddys Salango aim for another big draw in this Subsidiary International Tennis Federation (ITF) Pesos 25,000 Women's Tennis Tournament starting today at the Manila Polo Club's courts in Forbes Park, Makati.

Ilf Ajanah Salango and Fil-Ger Jane Pere have been given wildcard berths like the country's top tennis stars, Czech-ist Mae Anwanda and Alexa Heinicke Station, as they try to earn personal ITF points to boost their world rankings.

Ml Anastasia Denise Ou is also in the main draw of the $16,000 tournament sponsored by GOCOs, one of the world's leading suppliers of women as well as aggregates, concrete and construction-related services, and its local affiliate Union Concrete Corporation.

The organizing Philippine Tennis Association says still awaiting word from the ITF on the participation of Khline Chevalier of France, who was supposed to be the top seed but never, but bogged off at the last moment, and several entitled bets.

In a week tournament director Igna Imbuk released the pairings to participants only at 6 last night.

Korean Lee Ye Na, the seventh seed who represented her first ever international event last week without losing a set, will be the player to watch after displacing superb skills on the shift courts. Lee was among three Koreans who made it to the semifinals. The rest the crown now Hee Sun Lynn Jade.

In order for the winner of the event also supported by PT Island Glass Development Fund, Wilson balls and Holiday Inn Manila Galleria Hotel a $1,600 and 6 ITF points. The runner-up receives $1,000 and 4 ITF points and the losing semifinalists $500 and two points each.

The doubles champion share the $600 prize, with the losing finalist splitting $250.

Rough landing fails to shake commish

Eddie Rempillo

By June Navarro

MORE annoying than dangerous.

This was how PBA commissioner Noli Eala described the rough landing of a Cebu Pacific DC-9 flight that had to roll over after touching down at the Sucbian City airport yesterday.

"We had a rough landing but it was more annoying than dangerous," said Eala, who was in the flight to join the PBA delegation to Davao City, where Talk N' Text faces Purefoods today.

Eala learned of the accident minutes after all the passengers of Flight 611 had disembarked.

Cebu Pacific is the official carrier of the PBA and does and Eala said the league has no plans to change airlines because of the incident.

Meanwhile, Manila Regional Trial Court branch 45 judge Marcelino Sayo Jr. surrendered his authority to decide on the civil case filed by Purefoods against Talk N' Text's Jimmy Alapag, effectively stopping deposition proceedings against him.

Sayo decided to inhibit himself based on a motion filed by the Department of Justice and the Bureau of Immigration. Opposing motions for an injunction will have to be heard now in another court.

With a report from Sarao Quinsaenda

Phone Pals test FedEx . . .

Turn to page 12

ing the 4-3 Express fighting Bulls's worst-to-last two games and scores into this out-of-town game representing the Commissioner in high esteem.

"The team's morale is high and we're very confident. At the same time, our self-respect, self-esteem are building up," said Express coach Joe Lipa following his team's 109-103 win over powerhouse San Miguel Pilsilog.

The Phone Pals distributed the Express the first time. Ulysses Pilapil, 22 points and 17 rebounds from Yeadon. TNT has a 5-1 record in its last four games versus last year's Most Valuable Player.

Jesse Navarro

PAF 2 takes Open beach volley plum

CELLED at St. Benedict's Pre-Emptive and Tagaytay Everyday played with practices and a mandatory game today to take the College division of the first Tropic Beach Volleyball Championship. And destroy date from and take the court of Philippine Air Force 2 performed as impressively to top the Open division at the Camaya Sports Center's beach volleyball court. Clement Garcia and Jean Gonzales carrying the colors of another St. Benilde team, placed second in the College division while the Barangay Ginebra Lakers and Cecilia Tabuena finished runner-up in the Open class. Tournament organizer Alejandro "Boy" Lambuth congratulated the winners and thanked major sponsor Tropical Hotel and secondary Tanduay Rhum, Allison Sports, Asia Brewery, Cagayanvox Canalyman and Continental Milk.

Seattle slays San Antonio; Raptors win

SEATTLE—Rashard Lewis scored 27 points and Ray Allen added 24, leading the Supersonics to their second straight win at home, a 113-94 victory Sunday night over the San Antonio Spurs.

Seattle lost its season opener by 36 points to the Clippers in Los Angeles last week.

Danny Fortson had 13 points and 13 rebounds for the Sonics, who snapped a seven-game losing streak to the Spurs. It was Seattle's first win over the Spurs since March 20, 2002.

In Toronto, Vince Carter had 25 points, including a go-ahead 3-pointer with 4.8 seconds left, as the Eastern Conference-leading Raptors rallied to beat the Portland Trail Blazers.

But not all is well in Toronto. The attendance of 13,002 was the smallest home crowd in the Raptors' history. Toronto owns 20-10 last season, meaning the playoffs, said Carter, a five-time All-Star, who's a free agent next season.

In Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant scored 24 points, as the Los Angeles Lakers handed Atlanta its third straight lopsided loss, 106-86. AP

LAMAR Odom of the Los Angeles Lakers soars for a dunk against the Atlanta Hawks. In Toronto, Raptors superstar Vince Carter (right photo) does a little jig after draining a crucial trey against Portland.

NBA on Solar

The Denver Nuggets and Utah Jazz, two of the NBA's best young teams, go head-to-head live at 9:30 a.m. today (Tuesday) Nov. 9 on Solar Sports (replay 9 p.m.).

Goosen clinches final PGA crown

ATLANTA—US Open champion Retief Goosen closed with a 6-under 64 Sunday to win the PGA season-ending Tour Championship by four shots and become only the third player to overtake Tiger Woods in the final round.

Goosen made up a four-shot deficit on the front nine at East Lake, took the lead with a 35-foot birdie putt on the 12th and sealed all the suspense with the last shot of the tournament.

From 199 yards in the rough, he hit a 5-iron into 3 feet for the only birdie of the day on the 481-yard, 18th hole.

"I wasn't trying to hit it dead at the flag, just a touch left," Goosen said. "But those things happen."

Losing a 14-hole lead almost never happens to Woods, although that has been a year like nearly all of his.

He lost a 58-hole lead in consecutive weeks to Ellay for the first time in five years, had more bogeys (nine) than birdies (eight) in the final round, matching his lowest output in nine years on tour. He also won only once in 1998.

"Very disappointing," Woods said. "I felt like I had a golden opportunity to win a couple tournaments." AP

Radcliffe erases Olympic trauma

NEW YORK—World record holder Paula Radcliffe rebounded from her Athens Olympics heroism on Sunday with a dramatic victory in the closest finish yet in the women's New York City marathon.

The 30-year-old Briton, who dropped out of the Olympic marathon in August after nearing the race in Heraklio, was made to work with Kenyan Susan Chepkemei until the final meters, where she pulled away to win by four seconds in 2:23:10.

"I don't think today was about avenging our messages and I think it's very difficult to make up for it," Radcliffe said.

Hendrik Ramaala became the second South African to win the men's race in 2:09:58. Reuters

Safin strikes in Paris; Mauresmo rules Advanta

PARIS—Russian ninth seed Marat Safin clinched his third Paris Masters title here on Sunday when he overwhelmed Czech qualifier Radek Stepanek, 6-3, 7-6 (7/5), 6-3.

Only Swedish legend Boris Becker, in 1986, 1989 and 1992, had previously won three Paris titles, while Sunday's victory also gave Safin, champion here in 2000 and 2002, his 14th career crown.

It was his third win of the season to follow victories in Beijing in September and at the Madrid Masters two weeks ago.

"I didn't have a great middle of the year but finally success is coming again at last," said crowd favorite Safin, who now has a 21-3 win-loss record at this event shedding luck in his five appearances in 1999.

In Philadelphia, world No. 2 Amelie Mauresmo of France defended a title for the first time in her career, beating Russia's Vera Zvonareva, 7-6, 6-1, 6-2, in the WTA Advanta Championship final here Sunday.

"I've never held a title before and it's excellent for my confidence," Mauresmo said. AFP

OPBF king Laurente best October fighter

FOR SUCCESSFULLY defending the Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation lightweight crown for the third time in Oct. 2, Dennis Laurente has been chosen by the Games and Amusements Board as its Boxer of the Month for October.

Boxing division chief Emmanuel Perez said Laurente of the Johnny Monde Stable was cited for his masterly decision win over Japanese Chihachi Inada in Tokyo, Japan.

It was Laurente's third defense of the crown he won by unanimous decision against another Japanese, Yusuke Ohioka, on Nov 25, 2003.

During the recent World Boxing Council meeting in Thailand, WBC president Jose Sulaiman ordered Laurente's inclusion in the world's top 10 lightweights. As a result, the Bulo-based, Mobe Laurente-trained southpaw is now ranked No. 7.

The 27 year-old Laurente has a 21-1-4 win-loss-draw record, with 11 KOs.

Aaron L. Laguardia

MAGLAS has picked up enough FSA riding points to breach \$600, according to estimates.

Paragua to get GM title in January

By Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

FILIPINO International Master Mark Paragua will become the country's latest, and possibly first super grandmaster by January next year.

This was insisted by Carlo Alfonso Jr., the country's delegate to the World Chess Federation (FIDE), yesterday in an overseas conversation with National Chess Federation of the Philippines (NCFP) president Go Teng Kok.

Paragua's application for GM status was placed on hold during the recent World Chess Congress in Spain.

Alfonso explained that the country must achieve Paragua get his GM norm. Still in the period for crossed by FIDE's quarterly report.

"But by January when the report is submitted, Paragua will get his GM title," Alfonso assured Go.

Alfonso also holds key FIDE positions of military chief and ambassador.

Go sought Alfonso's clarification after getting wind of Paragua's status in the FIDE official website.

"Hopefully the country will have its first super GM at the start of the year," said Go, who has over IM teams in the Olympiad and the World Youth Games despite the federation's scarce resources.

Based on unofficial estimates, Paragua has already achieved an ELO rating of 2602, before the start of the Olympiad. Players getting at least an ELO of 2600 are called Super GMs.

He is to receive such a measure applicable in chess tournament in rhythm, GM status is unquestioned.

Paragua played 13 matches in the recent Olympiad, the most by any Filipino, scoring 7.5 points on six wins against four losses and three draws.

With a performance rating of 2586, the 22-year-old Bicolano grandmaster a few more points in his bid to become the country's highest rated player.

Dipolog tops adidas under-19 qualifier

DIPOLOG booked a place in the FFF adidas Under-19 finals recently after winning the Western Mindanao eliminations at the Joaquin Enriquez Memorial Sports Complex in Zamboanga.

The Dipolog booters first whipped Bagulaso, 4-0, before trouncing Zamboanga, 3-0, to become the second team after Cebu to make the national finals.

Striker Yann Custodio scored a goal in each of the two victories.

Cebu got into the tournament automatically for being the host of the national finals later in the year.

Coached by Bebot Aldo Reginald, Dipolog also got goals from Edrick Barrogo, Michael Boiser and Flevens Gambana in the win over Bagulaso.

Christian Jay Salvador scored the first goal against Zamboanga, which controlled long stretches of the match but failed to hit the back of the net.

Gonzales vaults into tie for 3rd

FILIPINO International Master Jayson Gonzales took the scalp of Oriol Alfredo Barbin of Chile in the ninth round and then subdued Herbert's 14th seeded compatriot Bil Javier Campos Moreno in the next round Sunday to vault into a tie for third to seventh place in the Calvia Open Festival in Mallorca, Spain.

Gonzales, a 33 year-old Army colonel from Antipolo City, totaled 5.5 points to move a notch to be in a group that includes Grandmaster Mark Paragua, International Master Eugenio Torre, 1993 Grandmaster Antonio Del Rio Angeles of Spain, GM Peter Graham of England and Swedish GM Mattis Nisman Carlsson, who all tallied the 6.0 points each.

Seventh seed GM Ruben Felgaer of Argentina and ninth seed GM Rodrigo Vasquez of Chile shared the fourth with 6.0 points apiece.

Seventh seed IM Mark Bauguis bounced back from a defeat to Israelite in the sixth round, scoring 5.5 points to tie in 11th place with 5.0 points.

Paragua, host of the country's opening match of Torre's world champion Hungary in the Chess Olympiad and who stands to earn his GM status in January, shares the playing with second seed Super GM Jesper Thelen of the Netherlands.

Gonzales settled for a draw with IM Gerardo Garcia Palermo of Argentina on Saturday.

In the eight round, Gonzales fights with Vasquez, while Paragua takes on Uzbek GM Alisher Suvatov.

Marlon Bernardino

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2004 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER B1

BUSINESS

E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inq7.net/money

John Raoul D. Marcelo
Assistant Editor Carrie S. Martinez

Philcom Foundation Provides*
Call Processing Phone
Voice Mail
Auto Attendant
Call Forwarding
Conference Calling
Call Waiting
Caller ID
Call Transfer
Hunting
Speed Dialing
Call Hold
Music on Hold
Intercom
Call Pickup
Call Park
Call Monitoring
Call Recording
Call Barging
Call Whispering
Call Coaching
Call Queuing
Call Reporting
Call Statistics
Call Billing
Call Accounting
Call Management
Call Control
Call Routing
Call Distribution
Call Handling
Call Processing
Call Center
Call Center Software
Call Center Hardware
Call Center Solutions
Call Center Services
Call Center Support
Call Center Training
Call Center Consulting
Call Center Outsourcing
Call Center Management
Call Center Operations
Call Center Technology
Call Center Trends
Call Center Best Practices
Call Center Case Studies
Call Center Success Stories
Call Center Testimonials
Call Center Awards
Call Center Events
Call Center Conferences
Call Center Seminars
Call Center Workshops
Call Center Webinars
Call Center Podcasts
Call Center Blogs
Call Center Forums
Call Center Communities
Call Center Networking
Call Center Partnerships
Call Center Alliances
Call Center Vendors
Call Center Suppliers
Call Center Manufacturers
Call Center Distributors
Call Center Resellers
Call Center Integrators
Call Center Consultants
Call Center Analysts
Call Center Researchers
Call Center Publishers
Call Center Media
Call Center Press
Call Center Magazines
Call Center Newspapers
Call Center Websites
Call Center Blogs
Call Center Podcasts
Call Center Videos
Call Center Webinars
Call Center Events
Call Center Conferences
Call Center Seminars
Call Center Workshops
Call Center Training
Call Center Consulting
Call Center Outsourcing
Call Center Management
Call Center Operations
Call Center Technology
Call Center Trends
Call Center Best Practices
Call Center Case Studies
Call Center Success Stories
Call Center Testimonials
Call Center Awards

Bush will Kerry on

I COULD not write last week because I unfortunately came into possession of some highly confidential information which would have affected the outcome of the US election and, therefore, the fate of the world. What happened was that I was playing in a backgammon tournament and my anti-opponent was an American CIA agent working deep undercover. He gave his name as John Smith, which obviously was not true, and the address of his condominium, but I forgot his room number.

When I asked the receptionist, she said, "We have three John Smiths. Which one do you want?" When I looked bewildered, she said, "There's John Smith the father, John Smith the swordsmith, and John Smith the spy." I was startled to have his cover story blown, but I proceeded to his room.

While setting out the backgammon board, the CIA showed a picture of Osama bin Laden on his laptop. "Prominent Arab has invested you for 1% part four years." "For nothing is the way of Christ," I thought. It was a strange message to convey and I noticed that his eyes were sparkling with health, whereas, previously, he looked quite ill. I mentioned this to my opponent and he said:

"We took a copy of the tape to the US Embassy and they said that they would have it 'declassified,' whatever that means. They removed the top layers of pancake dust, kept by layers, just as you would peel an onion. When they had the soft, queer head of Osama left, he's sudden changed into the tall, gaunt head of John Kerry. He had donned a false beard, number and robe, then skillfully applied makeup to thicken his skin. The outer layer of previous messages had been utilized to form the simple message, 'I want to be elected pres.'

"I was at El Bimbo's last night," he said, lastly, we did not know what to do. To release the news would have had an obvious impact on the election, as are decided, rightly or wrong, by to keep quiet. Had Kerry won, we would have been faced with a terrible dilemma, but as President Bush won, the story can soon be told. Of course, it's challenged, the CIA will deny it and submarine, like chefs, do not reveal their secrets.

Nah de Lurio has been given another post. Photo has a quadriplegic.

Vice President Dick Cheney's daughter is a lesbian, but she plans to run for office. Will she get a mandate?

* * *

ANYONE who read my column two weeks ago, before the market opened, was indeed fortunate. I wrote that the degree of risk had fallen to only seven and that a recovery was

MR. BEARBULL

Ben Nadhem

imminent. Subscribers got the message a day earlier and both were advised to BUY as soon as the market showed any signs of strength. Well, the TRIER was up on points after 10 minutes, so that was the signal to BUY whatever stocks you fancied. Within three, the market bore now almost non-stop and gained over 300 points.

This makes the 13th time in 16 months that the risk indicator has hit the bottom or top to within one day. Out of the last six signals, five have been one day ahead, just like this one. This is possibly because I use a sophisticated momentum indicator that does not always follow price and has the ability to reverse direction ahead of the market.

My audience only gives about one signal a month, so, if you are a follower, you must get in, or out, immediately after receiving it. Waiting a few days before acting is useless, as by then, you will have sacrificed probably a third of your profit. It is our mission for beginners or anyone with less than P100,000 to cash.

The dividend season is in full swing, and the results have been mixed. In the telecom sector, GLOBE came out with disappointing third quarter results. Instead of profits rising from P2.80 billion to P3 billion, they unexpectedly dropped to P1.06 billion. This was partly due to the company's decision to take down 200 cell sites built in 2000. The carrier has been approaching enough spare in the dollar and, therefore, against the peso. The directors decided not to risk losing any more money on the exchange rate.

The other reason was that they had to give a 20 percent discount on airtime in order to prevent subscribers switching to SMART. They are always on the defensive because they lack the innovative ability of their main rival, who introduced a cash incentive system for its subscribers months ago. Globe, meanwhile, is coming up with a similar system.

The results from TEL were better than expected. The President had forecast that the first quarter would be below the second quarter, boosted by the election, and the third quarter would be below the fourth quarter. Five analysts submitted earnings forecast of P6. I billion but I could not see how that could be correct. The company had added three million new subscribers and, automatically controlled operating expenses, so I predicted P6 billion. The actual figure was P6.1 billion.

For this year, the President is forecasting P34 billion, but as the company has already made P18.2 billion, excluding a non-recurring profit, I am expecting about P25.4 billion and this is in line with our research department. For 2005, analysts should raise to P30 billion and research has a year-end target of P33,800,000,000 a 2005 target of P1,000. I see no reason to quarrel with these figures and you should buy for the long-term.

ALI produced good figures with extend income from sales to prevent me to the completion of Greenhills' 5. By next year, they will have the full benefit of Greenhills 4 and also of Market Market at Bert Bonifacio. Sales of condominiums rose 64 percent and the bulk quarter is expected to be a bonanza. Due to the delay in the completion of Greenhills 5, the net profit was only up 9 percent but this will improve by the end of the fourth quarter. In 2005, the net profit should be rising by at least 52 percent, possibly 81 percent.

AC, which has a 71-percent stake in ALI plus substantial holdings in BPI and GLOBE, has just announced that the third quarter was up by 62 percent, but I have not had time to study the figures as they were announced after Friday.

Mr. Bibay predicted disappointing figures due to the results attributable to the increased of power and electricity. However, they promised to achieve their target for the year and their operations in China to doing well.

UCC has been disappointing due to non-stop selling of the stock by PAL and now PEPL. It has announced that its sales in 2003, (IM (Philippines) is on May 15 and I am keeping my fingers crossed.

The most intriguing stock is DGTL. Apparently, the 24/7 promo is doing very well and high school students have all been switching to SUN or GLOBE as they can only talk on one night and day. Some university students have followed suit, but the older members are staying with SMART or GLOBE. The new mobile company that might be achieved is PILTEL in the provinces, but I have not had the number. The revenue-sharing split is nowhere but to expect it to be 90/20.

The future of the stock market depends largely on whether the Senate can restore the "tax cut" bill in its original P 95 billion instead of the watered-down version. Analysts would produce only P6.6 billion next year. *Author: bal@hotmail.com*

Gov't to issue Securitization Act implementing rules by yearend

Bangko Sentral readies rules on banks' CDO investments

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL ng Pilipinas is finalizing the guidelines that will govern banks' investments in structured notes and "collateralized debt obligations (CDOs).

In an interview, BSP Assistant Governor Nestor Espenilla said the BSP was currently studying the rules that would allow banks to invest in these sophisticated financial instruments.

He said such an investment option would require new infusion capital from current and risk management capabilities.

Earlier, the BSP also issued new rules to allow banks to engage in credit-linked notes.

"A CDO is an investment in a pool of various types of credits," Espenilla said.

"We're thinking of linking them to credit ratings. The CDOs need to be sized and the capital treatment will be based on their ratings," he said.

CDOs are "investment" interests in pools of generally non-mortgage assets or collateral, consisting of loans or debt instruments.

A CDO may be called a "collateralized bond" loan or bond obligation. Investors bear the credit risk of the collateral.

Multiple tranches of investors are issued by the CDO, offering investors various maturity and credit risk characteristics.

Banking sources said the freshers be enrolled of the Philippines was now working with the BSP to finalize the rules of CDOs.

Other bankers said the new debt instruments would also arise out of the banks' bid to dispose non-performing loans to assets using the Special Purpose Vehicle framework.

A CDO usually requires the protections—whether a bank, other financial institutions or investment managers—to establish SPVs to hold collateral and issue securities.

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE GOVERNMENT is set to issue the implementing rules and regulations governing the Securitization Act of 2004, in the hope of encouraging the role of asset-backed securities and boosting market liquidity.

The Department of Finance and the Securities and Exchange Commission are finalizing the details of the IRR, including the modes of execution of the tax perks provided by the law.

A finance official said the laws optimistic issue expected to complete the IRR soon for issuance before end of the year.

Republic Act No. 9267, also known as the Securitization Act of 2004, provides not only the legal and regulatory framework for transactions related to the sale of asset-backed securities, but also the granting of tax perks to such deals. It also provides documentary of as high as 50 percent on registration and transaction fees.

The official said there was at present no security transactions involving the transfer of asset-backed securities. He said the government was pushing for the passage of the bill to entice even the BSP was issued. He added that there were already several applications for the setting up of secondary market transactions, which will provide liquidity to lenders or holders of asset-backed securities.

The DOF earlier said the Securitization Law was expected to boost lending and investment in the market liquidity.

"The law is hoped to result in the creation of a favorable market environment for a wide range of asset-backed securities (ABS), which are expected to provide the link between the capital markets and the borrowers who need the funds for various economic activities," the DOF said.

The tax perks granted by the Securitization Act include the following:

- exemption from SEC and DST of the sale or transfer of assets from the financial institutions to the special purpose entities (SPEs);
- exemption from capital gains tax of the transfer of assets (made to pay debts or income receipts) for the obligor to the SPE;
- exemption from NIT of the original issuance of ABS, and the securities related solely to some taxation transactions;
- exemption from VAT and DST of all secondary trading and subsequent transfers of ABS, including all forms of credit enhancement devices; and
- exemption of the SPE, which is not considered a financial institution, from the payment of gross receipts tax and
- exemption from VAT and DST on transfer of assets and collateral from the SPE to the originator or seller.

Bayantel says it's not in talks with Hong Kong's Hutchison

By Clarissa S. Batino

SEARS on the unrelated interest of the Li Ka-shing group in the local telecom sector have fueled speculative play on Bayantel Holdings Corp., parent company of Bayan Telecommunications Inc. and Digitel Telecommunications Phils. Inc. on the stock market.

Bayantel and Digitel officials were the first most actively traded yesterday with turnover of 46.11 million shares. Its share price rose 9 centavos or 6.25 percent to 68 centavos.

Hutchison Telecommunications, a unit of Li Ka Shing's Hutchison Whampoa, was interested in Digitel.

However, a trader said the company's interest had shifted to Bayantel.

Bayantel officials, however, denied that they were in talks with Hutchison.

Digitel president Lance Gokongwei backdated its late September census that the Hong Kong-based telecom player wanted to buy into the Gokongwei phone company.

Bayantel chief finance officer Salvador Bayan said there was no truth to the rumors.

"I don't think there are talks with Hutchison," he said, adding that there might be some interest in Bayantel subsidiary Express Telecommunications Inc.

"A substantial amount is needed to revive Bayantel. Right now Bayantel is looking at different options. Maybe for Digitel, but there are no concrete plans yet," said Bayan.

Bayantel was the most actively traded stock yesterday with turnover of 46.11 million shares. Its share price rose 9 centavos or 6.25 percent to 68 centavos.

Hutchison Telecommunications is a country, was originally interested in Bayantel but instead talks bogged down.

Hutchison, according to sources, has been trying to have increased liquidity but could not capitalize because interested because of unsuccessful rehabilitation.

The telco holds a license to operate a wireless service and was assigned several frequencies that could be attractive to existing players.

It used to operate an analog service and at one time, its subscribers reached about 250,000.

DISCLOSURES

LIBERTY Telecoms Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Nov. 28 at 9 a.m. at the Palms Country Club, 1410 Laguna Bonghai Drive, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

* * *

A BROWN Co. Inc. approved the appropriation of P5 million to buy back shares. It also approved the refund of P1.72 million in difference rental paid by Filipino Farmer Inc. for a parcel of land in Tandag, Surigao. Buyer terminated of the lease contract.

* * *

ALSONET Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Nov. 22 at 5 p.m. at the Metropolitan Club, Estrella corner Amapola Streets, Makati City.

* * *

CONTAINER Terminal Systems Solutions Inc. and **ICTSI Mauritius Inc.**, both subsidiaries of International Container Terminal Services Inc., won supply contracts as equipment and technology contractor with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority.

* * *

MANULIFE Financial Corp. declared quarterly shareholders' dividends of C$ 0.21 on common shares and C$ 0.3781 on preferred shares, payable on or after Dec. 20 to shareholders of record. *Compiled by D.J. Yap, PDI Research*

Gov't allots ₱100B . . .

by the rehabilitation of the Alabang viaduct along the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) and the linking of the SLEX to Colorado, Laguna, to the South Luzon Tagalog Arterial Road (STAR) to Batangas.

Studies passing through SLEX and STAR represent about 60 percent of the country's road projects since many electronics and semiconductor exporters are located in the Calabarzon area.

"Work on the project could start in the first quarter of 2005, after the rush of the holidays," Ista said.

Ista, who is also director general of the National Economic and Development Authority, said there were P26 billion in initial funds available to PIC through existing government credit lines.

Earlier, Trade Secretary-General Purisima said the government wanted to raise as much as P500 billion for some 18 major infrastructure projects to be undertaken by PIC.

The first tranche of funds would be raised from the National Development Corp.'s plastic recovers as well as some other assets that would be transferred to PIC from the Privatization Management Office, Purisima said.

He said additional capital would be sourced through paper based financing from the Development Bank of the Philippines, which is also the PIC's financial adviser.

"We need to push for infrastructure projects here it is difficult to get investors to start there," the trade chief said. "The establishment of the PIC is meant to jump-start these projects."

No such thing as free hunch

Consuelo B. Bautista III

BETWEEN us girls, I heard that the DTI accidentally bumped into problems in its power book, case, "computerization" job.

Again, that's the Department of Trade and Industry which does has the open bundles of business with the business sector.

Really, if you want to go into business, you have to deal with the DTI one way or another. It's the big Daddy in the government. The DTI is the redbook, the highway patrol, and the hidden cameras—all rolled into one.

To customers of the DTI, size of so does not really matter. Sure, most of them are small entrepreneurs. But others can be as big as the separated busts of some rockers.

And this key agency is caught in a bind with its computerization project. It involves the registration of businesses—the most basic of the basic stuff in doing business anywhere in the universe.

It seems that the DTI, working on a bunch, went for supposedly "free" software. As everybody in business knows, there's no such thing as free lunch.

* * *

FROM what I heard in the local IT scene, the DTI decided to use Linux as the operating system for its computers in the registration process.

Linux is what they call in the IT business as "non-proprietary" software.

Down here, it only means that you can copy the computer program all you want, said the DTI—acting on the incorrect advice of Bill Gates, who is said to be the world's richest man probably soon only to outside AFP generals or ex-generals—will not run after you.

The DTI has made it a point to enforce the law against theft of "intellectual property"—such as those of Gates, i.e. Microsoft, which is otherwise known as "piracy"—the theft, see Microsoft.

In a more technical vein, based on what I picked up from the Internet, Linux is an "open source." It means that it is, well, "open" for everybody to use. I still can't believe how those techies can invent jargon in several pigeon per nanosecond.

Anyway, the DTI computerization project bogged down, apparently due to technical hitches. This early in the game, or that? What if it is already up and running, and all of a sudden everything stops?

Your correspondent is trying to use the damage such a computer glitch can do.

* * *

WOMANAIN, for the sake of the record, Linux is open source software which makes the computer work.

It features the "Windows" brand of Gates' Microsoft, of course, minus the "open source" programs such as Linux, which are otherwise known as "piracy"—the theft, see Microsoft.

Based on reports from abroad, Microsoft is losing sales to Linux. One estimate puts sales of Intel-based systems using Linux at $40 billion by 2008, as compared to $12 billion for those with Windows.

In other words, Linux does pose a threat to Microsoft's dominance of the world's software business. This is good for the world, with Microsoft already cutting its prices. This would occur happen in the land of business, for instance, despite the existence of "competition."

In Europe, anyway, they are already starting to realize that the "free open source" proposition are not exactly free. Look, as I said, there is no such thing as free lunch, okay? Even the "primed" copies in Greenhills cost something.

* * *

A GOOD number of the recent high-profile takeovers from Windows to Linux was reported among the government-owned biz in Europe, such as Germany's Federal Parliament.

You know what—that particular changeover already led to a breakdown, after the network servers were switched to Linux.

Based on reports from abroad, users in the Federal Parliament could no longer connect to the Internet.

They had to, well, "restructure" the Windows-operating system.

And that is not a first. In Munich, Germany, for instance, the city government also had to stop a similar changeover to Linux.

This time, the cause was not a technical breakdown such as the one in the parliament, or glitches, such as those in the DTI-embroil project. It is about the "cost" entailed in running the supposedly "free" Linux.

* * *

AN article posted on the Internet by the Forbes publication had this to say:

"How could 'free' Linux cost more than Windows? First of all, find free, the leading Linux distributor, now charges $799 to $2,499 for each server running Linux. That's not for the software, mind you, but for 'maintenance, heuristics units, you're paying for Linux.'

Nobody knows as yet how much "maintenance" the DTI will have to pay its contractor for the problematic computerization project. Sure, the operating system does not cost a thing. It is free!

A simple flick of the finger on the keyboard will lead you to instant reports on the "billions saved" of underdog to "free" systems.

One report deals with the "retraining" of users, or the rewiring of applications to run the "free" system, or the listing of installations and all the kings's men, to put the whole thing together again.

It's that kind of FREE.

* * *

TALKING about computerization, I know that only remote cities in Metro Manila have computerized their systems for assessment of real property taxes.

The list is the biggest income earner for local government units. Quezon City under Mayor Sonny Belmonte, for instance, is raking it in due to the computerization of the assessments. Computers are a good thing for tax collection.

But what is this I hear about the much-watered-down declaration of real property of a low-profile multi-billionaire who owns huge chunks of land in Metro Manila and is one of the country's biggest importers of steel, whose family name is also "Steel"?

A copy of the declaration, which was made available to us by a source, showed that the value of one of his buildings on Dela Rosa Avenue in San Juan was put at only P22 million by the municipal assessor's office.

Again, that's only P22 million for a huge three-story commercial building, excluding parking basement, on a 2,000-square meter lot fronting a busy avenue in a prime commercial area.

Getting into the construction of such a building is about P1.85 million already, excluding the value of the land. Blockade something is wrong here.

Already, the corporate name of the property development full-down several times to give way to the commercial building, and nothing was heard from the DENR.

Is the group really that well connected or what?

OUTCRY OVER DOJ OPINION

Cargo firms threaten to pull out of RP

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE PHILIPPINES runs the risk of losing big investors such as federal Express, DHL and United Parcel Service if the Arroyo administration would limit foreign ownership of airfreight companies based on a recent justice department opinion.

Henry Schumacher, executive vice president of the European Chamber of Commerce, said a recent Department of Justice opinion (No. 291) could have far-reaching repercussions on the existing foreign cargo carriers.

In its opinion, the DOJ said airfreight forwarding firms should be treated as public utilities, like a bus company or a port office.

The opinion runs counter to the department's ruling of 1975 and 1999 that "an airfreight forwarder is an indirect air carrier ... and is not subject to the nationality requirement."

Schumacher pointed out that foreign airlines engaged in providing air transportation between the Philippines and other points overseas were not subject to nationality requirements.

"If the DOJ opinion is not going to be revised, international airfreight forwarders with more than 40 percent foreign shareholdings may lose their either cancellation of their licenses to operate as such with the Civil Aeronautics Board," said the head of the European Chamber.

Schumacher noted that airfreight companies act as indirect carriers. They neither serve the general public, nor are they a franchised utility, he said.

"The consequences of a different interpretation of law would have far-reaching consequences," Schumacher stressed. "Actions like these not only discourage investments in the country, they also rob existing investors of their trusts of labor and investments."

He added that some of these investors have allocated huge amounts over a long period of time, some have been here for more than 25 years, on the assumption of a stable investment climate and laws unchanged for the last 29 years.

Schumacher pointed out the DOJ opinion also ran counter to the policy of the Arroyo administration to turn cities like Clark and Subic into logistics hubs.

"I guess Fedex, DHL in 1970 will consider moving their investment somewhere else," he said. "The biggest problem for investors in the Philippines is not the law or the Constitution. It's the liberal, shifting and often self-serving interpretation of law, which continues to create havoc on the investment climate."

The head of the European chamber said that DOJ must reverse its position if the Philippines wanted to assert its place in the logistics industry and international trade.

INTERNATIONAL cargo firms such as Fedex, UPS and DHL may have to pull up stakes and look for greener pastures elsewhere if the Philippine government would apply the controversial justice department ruling on foreign ownership. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

PCI Leasing gets SEC nod to sell ₱500M in STCPs

By Doris C. Dumlao

LEADING leasing firm PCI Leasing and Finance Inc., a unit of Ayalabelle PCI Bank, has received the approval of the Securities and Exchange Commission to issue P500 million worth of short-term commercial papers (STCPs).

PCILF, which shall use the proceeds from STCPs to expand its product offering, issued similar debt instruments worth P100 million last year.

Philippine Ratings has given the PCILF's debt issuance its highest rating of PRS 1, indicating the strongest capability for timely payment of both interest and principal.

"Our high credit rating reflects our solid market leadership, the strength of our balance sheet and our progress in further growing our revenue and earnings," said PCILF vice chairman Oscar J. Hontanosas Jr.

PCILF, with assets of P5.45 billion, is the largest IT27 issuer among local leasing firms. It recently increased the amount of its loans after the infusion of its borrowings expanded while its portfolio increased.

In assigning the rating, PhilRatings cited the company's leading market position, its strong capital base, steady earnings performance and more than-adequate matching of payables and receivables. It also cited the company's strong financial flexibility.

"We continue to innovate in terms of improving existing systems and in coming up with new services and tapping new markets," said Manolo Israel, company president.

Last year, PCILF booked revenues of P760 million and a net profit of P226 million. For the six months to June this year, it booked revenues of 356 million and net profit of P109.3 million.

As of June 30, its total assets stood at P5.44 billion and total liabilities at P3.36 billion.

La Union, Iligan folk brace for higher electricity costs

By Abigail L. Ho

RESIDENTIAL power users in Iligan and La Union will have to shoulder higher electricity costs starting this month as the Energy Regulatory Commission allows to partly remove the latter's flat cross-subsidy scheme of the distribution utilities in the areas.

In its Oct. 27 meeting, the regulatory body approved the phased removal of cross-subsidies being implemented by Iligan Light and Power Inc. (ILPI) and La Union Electric Co. (Luelco), as mandated by Republic Act No. 9136 or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (EPIRA).

For ILPI customers, the cross-subsidy removal would result to an increase of 9.30 centavos per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential power users; 4.69 centavos per kWh for industrial users on the first year of implementation. The surge in costs will be reflected in the November billing cycle.

In the same phase, commercial customers will enjoy a rate reduction of 3.05 centavos per kWh, bulk power users 11.81 centavos per kWh and flat rate customers 7.41 centavos per kWh.

The full cross-subsidy removal will have two more phases of implementation in 2005 and 2006, with each phase representing the removal of one-third of the total cross-subsidy amount.

Luelco customers, on the other hand, will only experience a two-phase cross-subsidy removal, which will also be reflected in the November billing cycle.

For the first phase where 48 percent of the total cross-subsidy amount will be removed, residential users will have to shell out an extra 4.55 centavos per kWh; small commercial customers 4.05 centavos more and flat rate customers another 23.05 centavos per kWh.

By next year, when the balance of the Luelco cross-subsidies are scrapped, residential customers' bills will further increase by 6.81 centavos per kWh, small commercial users' charges by 7.45 centavos per kWh and flat rate users' rates by 34.57 centavos per kWh.

Asean, South Korea seen to start hammering out free trade issues

By Konrad W. Dominguez

THE ASSOCIATION of Southeast Asian Nations next year hopes to start talks with South Korea on a proposed free trade agreement, which it aims to boost Philippine export earnings by $300 million to $1 billion a year.

Angelito Salvador M. Bonoan Jr., assistant director of the Bureau of International Trade Relations, said the Trade and Philippine-Korea Business Forum that Asean-Korea Export Group has completed a joint study of the impact of the planned FTA on the concerned economies.

Bonoan Jr. added that the ABEG has recommended that the following steps be taken:

- That a framework agreement be developed, covering the basic rules and principles on the negotiations for an Asean-Korea FTA and also on future cooperative measures;
- That the FTA cover comprehensive liberalization and facilitation of trade and economic cooperation; and,
- That the level of liberalization be substantial yet provide flexibility.

The ABEG also wants negotiations to conclude as an early harvest package for the Philippines and other Asean member countries, especially the newer members of Asean.

The ABEG report that Asean and South Korea seek for an early implementation of the AKFTA, and for it to be consistent with agreements under the World Trade Organization.

Bonoan Jun said the Asean economic ministers and their South Korean counterparts agreed during consultations held last September to endorse these recommendations to the Asean-Korea Summit later this month in Vientiane, Laos.

Considering that the suggestions are expected to be accepted during the summit, negotiations are seen to start in 2005 and completed by 2007.

"The AKFTA is expected to be realized by 2009, by which time 80 percent of products traded between Asean and South Korea would have zero tariffs, while those for the remaining 20 percent would have been under negotiations," Bonoan Jr. added.

Asean and South Korea are each other's fifth-largest trading partners, with bilateral trade growing 12 percent between 2002 and 2003.

Asean exports to South Korea reached $17.2 billion in 2003. In the same year, South Korea's exports to the region amounted to $15.1 billion.

Along with the Philippines, Malaysia is expected to benefit the most in an AKFTA, with exports seen growing by as much as $1 billion a year.

Under an AKFTA, exports from Indonesia and Thailand are projected to grow by "more than a billion dollars," while exports from Singapore and Vietnam are seen to increase by $100 million to $500 million a year.

FAB Hong Kong Tatler Ball /C2

LIFESTYLE

Life Chefs Band Forums

MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS • TUESDAY FITNESS • WEDNESDAY 2BU • THURSDAY FOOD • FRIDAY FASHION & BEAUTY

PRICE is right for exercise injuries

WELL AND GOOD

TINA JAIN

IT'S ironic that I wrote about exercise injuries in last week's column because over the weekend my old shoulder injury paid me a visit. I was trying out a new exercise technique that required a lot of rotary movements. In my excitement to master a new skill I forgot that my left shoulder would be vulnerable to the large range of motion it was being put through.

Within 15 minutes I began to feel a familiar twinge of pain in my shoulder joint. Being older, wiser and smarter, I listened to the warning signals my body was sending me and immediately used some of the techniques in the PRICE protocol. Then my old injury friend just enough time to say hello and goodbye.

PRICE is an acronym that stands for protect, rest, ice, compress and elevate. It is used as a first-aid measure mostly for acute injuries but can also be beneficial for chronic injuries. An acute injury develops suddenly like a sprained ankle, while chronic injuries develop over time. Most exercise injuries are the chronic type. They start out as mild aches and pains but gradually get worse if ignored.

Pain is the body's No. 1 warning that something is wrong. It is most often caused by inflammation and swelling as the site of injury. This can happen suddenly like the rapid pain and swelling of a sprained ankle, or it can take place gradually over a period. An example would be feeling slight pain in the knees the day after doing step aerobics or spinning. Then feeling the pain right when the workout, then feeling it during the exercise session, and eventually your knees are painful even when you are not working out.

In my case, inflammation is just the body's natural response to the injury. Here is an explanation of the process from the book "Athletic Passion" by Dr. Paulo John of the Ateneo John Orthopedic Clinic: "The tissue senses the inflammation like an infection [even though it is not]. In doing so, the body attempts to 'quarantine' the injured area by sending in small blood boats with called platelets. The function of platelets is to clot or slow down blood flow. The brain also sends white blood cells to fight infection and histamines, which unlock tissue cells in the area to leak fluid into the spaces between the cells causing even more excess fluid in the area. All of this excess fluid and cellular material dramatically block normal blood flow, resulting in pain. In the very early stages of acute injury, the inflammation process helps stop bleeding of the injured tissue, so it's helpful. When inflammation persists, however, the problem is that it can ultimately interfere with movement and healing."

According to John, your main enemy in the hours following an acute injury is inflammation. "The more swelling occurs, the more affected your tissue will be and the longer it will take to get back to full strength." That's why it's important to start the PRICE regimen at once.

Protect

Protect the injured area from further damage by immediately ceasing the offending activity. Much as I wanted to continue trying out the new exercise routine, I took the more sensible route and stopped doing it. Since I protected my shoulder even more by not swinging my it for two nights, in the case of a sprained ankle, protect the joint by using crutches or any other means to avoid putting weight on it.

Rest

The rest component of the PRICE protocol seems self-explanatory. Let your injured joint or muscle rest while the pain and swelling goes down. But this doesn't mean that you can't exercise the other parts of your body that are not injured. My shoulder may have been hurting me but I still did brisk walking, did ab crunches, and worked on my legs

turn to

HONG KONG arrivers-ay at the Tatler Ball. Radha and Sham Chellaram with billionaires Kai Bong and Brenda Chan

THE GLAM pack: Eye-catching Bonnie Gokson with tall, good-looking international Dutch businessman Roger Verhoeven, Philippine Tatler editor Anne Sy, Diego and Linda Mauleon, Ho Ho Bliss

BRILLIANT adarnap: Arnie Chio and business magnate James Chan

Hong Kong's legendary night of glamour

IT was another fun exciting trip for me, pahanggan. I boarded Philippine Airlines for a trip to Hong Kong together with our friend Tatler editor in chief Anne Sy, photographer Alex Van Hagen and Philippine Tatler publisher Irene Madrid Francisco. Tatler editor in chief Anne Sy, Diego had gone a day ahead of us. Tatler's columnist Dr. Randy Francisco joined us from Malaysia to join us in Hong Kong.

Yes, darlings, all roads led to the grand ballroom of the Conrad Hotel, where the elegantly fabulous Hong Kong Tatler Ball was about to happen.

The ball was definitely a night to remember: gorgeous gowns, exquisite dress, the crème de la crème of Hong Kong's elite socialed, endless food, and more...

One gracious hostess, business magnate Bapa Balakrishnan and his lovely wife, the former Ireland Tatler all over again, Lalita Rose Balakrishnan, welcomed the arriving party guests who were dressed to their fingertips. The entire ballroom was tastefully and stunningly dressed, the men dapper in their tuxedos.

The subject of growing hemlines was in the air when, appropriately enough, Irene, the wife of the young couple Anne Chio and Aubrey Packett made their entrance. Former Manille gal Audrey is all set to deliver twin boys, pahanggan, to add to their current brood of three.

But for Gabriel Chan was Yolanda Tang, another mother-to-be with husband Hamilton. Reina Diaz was also an eye-catcher in her gown which was made, like Audrey's, in Manille from organza vitrage fabric.

The ballroom, dressed up by talented designer Silvia Berga, was awash in warm, rusted hues and dozens of giant lit boxes where the magazine's most memorable photographs were mounted. The ballroom's walls transformed large duo-tint pages of Tatler magazine. Absolutely immense!

The ball was also the occasion for the launch of Hong Kong Tatler's new look. The current issue's fashion shoot with Kay Li was singled out as being particularly stunning, with the beautiful model looking every inch a supermodel.

After a short and witty welcome speech by Dr. Balakrishnan, the Tatler team from around Asia assembled in front of the stage for the cake-cutting ceremony and toast.

The cake was the centerpiece of the most fitting culinary concoction of Executive executive chef Alfred Bloom, while the combined sounds of the Tatler Ball's regular musicians and our very own Indy Rancina Band serenaded us.

Even before dinner was served, organ billionaire Stanley Ho and his fourth wife, Angela Leong, were already making us the dance floor. They even did a mean Argentine tango, pahanggan!

The dinner entertainment was a blast. Guess who was the powerhouse performer? Dan Zeya no less! She joined in from Manille to deliver a set of soulful and upbeat songs, leaving us clamoring for more.

The climax of the evening was the awards presentation, and this year, no less than nine awards were given out.

Among the most notable winners was the glamorous Bonnie Gokson, a former Manille resident who won the "Most Stylish Woman" award for the second time in three years. She received a Christian Dior ball gown worth HK$80,000 from the designer's 2004 winter collection.

Another memorable moment was the acceptance speech by "Best Dressed 2004" awardee Elliot Wu, who joked about her prize of a Hummer car/dress.

Afterwards, Hong Kong's super prominent couple Clifford and Michelle Hsieh were whisked off to the dance floor by the band for a set of their favorite songs, including "It's the best party of the year. It's the only party you need really. In one night, you will see everyone you've been wanting to see, and you can catch up with everybody."

Darlings, that's so very Tatler, what can I say?

Dutch treat

The recent evening affair for the handsome president of Royal Philips Electronics of the Netherlands, Gerard Kleisterlee, was something more than a corporate soiree. It was a celebration of the strong ties between Holland and the Philippines.

The Hon. Robert Pierlot, Netherlands ambassador to the Philippines, together with his wife Hermenegildo, Nicola Hendriks, hosted the occasion at their elegant Forbes Park residence.

Kleisterlee brought great news during his three-day visit to our shores. There will be "renewed investments to boost the local Philips operations and the semiconductor industry in general," as well as numerous innovative activities being introduced by Philips to improve Filipino lives, and support for the 10-point economic program of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima was present to confer upon Philips the first Gawad Peñlac ng Bilangan Award for its invaluable contribution to the local economy.

DUTCH Ambassador Robert Verzil, Royal Philips Electronics Worldwide president/CEO Gerard Kleisterlee, Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima and Philips president/CEO Mel Matos

SAFRA Law president Lee Chiau, ASIA AMRO Bank general manager Carmelo Bautista and Shell Phil. president/CEO Ed Chua

BPI resident representative Marco Nikolai, Nicole Hendriks, Makati Business Club executive director Guillermo Luz and HSBC CEO Warner Manning

Ali A. in the family: Misha Hartlieb, Aryana Sudhersan Hartlieb and Shirley S. Hinanant

THE TSUNEN and his princess: Billionaire Stanley Ho doing a moon Argentinian tango with his fourth wife, gorgeous Angela Leong

Feasting on curry

From the outside, Banana Leaf Curry House is uptown Alabang looks like a first-class fast-food restaurant. That's how it sounds too, pahanggan, but there's more to it than just architecture: its food servings are simply superb.

Leslie Velasco, in town from Los Angeles where she now resides with her American husband, couldn't get enough of everything that was placed in front of her. Her sister Vicky V. Barrera, was more in control, but still raved about the dishes.

Miss Indy Beautiful Cory Quirino-Lowry her vegetarian dish. I stuck to my semi-South Beach diet and gorged on the chicken, the excellent lamb dish and the vegetable curry.

Food enthusiast Michael Pendo ate so much of the starters that he had to nibble the rest of the dishes laid out on the buffet table. Popular businessman Brad Griner enjoyed himself immensely washing all of us, including PR man Bonnie Ramirez, the first-rate fabulous bunch.

According to the young owners of Banana Leaf Curry House, "the Alabang branch was conceived and built with the idea of creating instant impact." Well, judging from the very positive response the branch has been getting, they're on the right track! Check out Banana Leaf and see what I mean, pahanggan. Cheers!

FIRST CLASS: Balinese mural? Nope, it's the Banana Leaf Curry House branch in Alabang.

A promise kept

Part 2

HOW Babylyn in her dying condition, hopelessly pinned between the steel seats and front panel of the car, could have managed to get the key from her bag that was immediately taken by looters, is hard to explain by pure logic. Is it possible that Babylyn's spirit was propelled by a very strong desire to return the important key to her sister and enabled her to do the impossible?

At their Legaspi home, Rose did not know yet of the accident. She was waiting for her relatives when the van their car arrive and even heard the familiar honking of the horn. So she told their maid to open the gates and let the car in.

When the maid opened the gates, she saw no car and told Rose so. That was strange, Rose thought, because she distinctly saw the car arrive and heard its horn. The mother of their driver had also seen the car but decided to just wait for her son to come home. She waited all evening but her son never showed up.

Mind trick or real?

What was it then that the two women saw? Were they merely hallucinating or imagining. Or (or because of their desire) is we their souls actually back? Were their minds simply playing tricks on them, or was there really a phantom car that came back?

Public and criminal suits were filed by the two parties involved. The Dira-Bantong family sued Victory Liner over the accident and, soon, Victory Liner sued the victims in return. The owners of the bus company blamed the drivers of the Dira-Bantong family for the tragedy which they, of course, denied. They believed it was the bus driver's fault.

Rose wanted to know for sure who was totally at fault. In the course of the investigation, the cowboy containing all documents pertaining to the case was lost.

Asking for answers

After some time had passed, Rose asked her dead father to give her a sign in reply to her question as to who was really at fault: 'Our driver or Victor's Liner?' That evening, after asking this question, Rose dreamt of her dead father. In the dream, he handed to her the missing envelop containing all the facts of the case, but said nothing else.

Rose took that to mean her father was telling her it was not their fault and that she should pursue the case. But because they were no longer receiving court notices on the charges made against them, their lawyers advised them not to pursue the case anymore.

On the 40th day after the death of her father and sister, Babylyn showed up in Rose's dream. She was wearing the dress Babylyn had on at the time of the accident. In her dream, she stood up to embrace her sister for the last time. She felt the warmth of her sister's body. She really felt her as if she was alive.

Astral projection

When her sister told she would like to say goodbye to her nephew, Audrey sleeping on the bed beside Rose, Rose looked down and saw her own physical body sleeping beside her son. Audrey (she knew then she had gone out of her body so she could find the ordinance of her sister, Babylyn. At that time, she did not know it was a case of astral projection).

Sensitivity to the spirit world can be both a blessing and a curse. In the case of Rose, the sensitivity helped her find out the truth about the accident that took the lives of her father and sister. It will depend on how Rose (Dira-Bantong handles her psychic gifts). If she develops it in a balanced and scientific manner, it could be of great help to her and to others, but if not, it could be a source of more confusion and problems. The rule is always to stay centered, balanced and whole.

There is much that Rose can learn about the spirit world and how to deal with it in Babylonia by studying them seriously and by not being afraid of them.

(If there is any lesson one can learn from the experiences of sensitive people like Rose, the dead stay with us for a long, long time after they have died.

* * *

ERRATUM: In the article last Tuesday (Nov 2), the other person in the Ford Laser that collided with the bus was Rose's engineer, not her mother-in-law as mentioned.

E-mail the author at jlcasco@pldtdsl.com.ph

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licasco

Sensitivity to the spirit world can be both a blessing and a curse

Journal for expectant moms

EVERY second, a miracle of a new life takes place.

And yet if we could the shelves of bookstores and gift shops everywhere, do we see journals or diaries especially for pregnant women, where they could put on paper thoughts, feelings and experiences?

Hardly. Those moments unique in pregnancy are often lost to the unpredictability of memory.

Now available in all National Bookstore outlets, Goodwill Bookstore, Mortiam and Solomon's Bookstore, Fully Booked, Bookwell and Rebisbook stores in Mindanao Commonwealth's newest publication, "My Journey through Pregnancy." With it, mothers-to-be are assured of a keepsake—in beautifully designed pages and well-laid out sections, which include doctors' reminders, pictures, and hopes and dreams for the baby. The journal sells for P299 per copy.

Mentum also publishes Medical Observer, the country's leading medical magazine that won an award for editorial excellence from the Society of Publishers in Asia in 2002, and The Filipino Midwife, a publication for midwives.

Soon to hit the bookshelves is Baby Minder, a four-booklet baby care reference for mothers. It talks about baby's proper nutrition, grooming and hygiene, growth and development, and common illnesses.

TV documentary on breast feeding

BREAST feeding is key to a newborn's survival. But while breast feeding may be a natural act after giving birth, alternatives have been outlawed.

"The Probe Team Documentaries" on Channel 5 examines the implications of these alternatives in light of Executive Order 51, commonly known as the Milk Code, which was enacted to promote breast feeding and provide a better, healthy life for mothers and their children.

In the episode, the Probe Team investigates hospitals violating the Milk Code and speaks with several mothers, including Mariel Lara-Pangilinan and Cherry Mercado-Santos, about changing lifestyles and the changing roles of mothers herself.

Get to know more about the gift of motherhood and breast feeding on "The Probe Team Documentaries" on Nov. 10, 10 p.m., on ABC-5.

SHARE Co, Betty Tuason, Rosalind Mon, Alonna Lopez, Cora Singian and Norway Mallorcas

Charity golf tournament set

AIMED at benefiting women and children, the Manila Lady Golfers Foundation Inc., will hold its second charity tournament dubbed the 2004 Manila Ladies Cup at Wack Wack Golf and Country Club.

The cup features a three-in-one tournament starting Nov. 16, with the ladies' and men's teams competition, culminating on Nov. 18. Nov. 19 is for ladies' individual play and ladies' team play.

Interested golfers are asked to call Beach Reuben or Joel at Wack Wack Golf and Country Club at 7230655 or 7236558.

This year's tournament proceeds will benefit Kythe, a foundation for cancer-stricken children, and the Mandaluyong Government Women.

Betsy Tuason, the foundation's chair, plans to make the charity golf tournament bigger each year to accomplish the benefits given to women and children charities. She invites all women golfers to join this year's tournament that is packed with many surprises, prizes and cash.

Manila Lady Golfers Foundation Inc. was founded by Tuasons, Chanco Co, Rosalind Mon, Alonna Lopez, Ellen Chua, Menzie Millenario and Cora Singian.

Machine melts fat using light energy

THE AMERICAN Academy of Dermatologic Surgery held its annual meeting in San Diego, California recently where a Swedenborgh machine called the "Vela Smooth" generated much buzz.

The Vela Smooth claims it can "melt" body fat using a combination of three modalities: Radiofrequency energy (RF), Infrared light (IR) and mechanized suction.

Cornell University alumnus Dr. Neil Sadick presented a paper explaining the advantages of this RF/IR combination. The procedure is called Lipolite.

Dr. Sadick's research was echoed by Dr. Tina Alster, director of Washington Institute of Dermatology and Laser Surgery, who found that the Lipolite procedure heats up fat tissue and contracts the collagen fibers, resulting in the tightening of the skin.

Vela Smooth deposits heat deep into the fat tissue and remained for about two hours, causing biochemical responses that eliminate fat, allowing it to be excreted from the body naturally.

Lipolite is a walk-in/walk-out procedure which requires no special preparations, diet or exercise regimen. The areas that respond best to the procedure are the tummy, upper arms, hips and thighs.

The procedure is done two to three times a week, during which a certain body area is targeted. Patients are required to enroll for a minimum of 12 sessions, each lasting approximately 30 minutes, although results can already be appreciated after the 4th or 5th session.

Dr. Mulholland, a renowned Beverly Hills plastic surgeon, combines the Lipolite procedure with Mesolipo. He discovered that he could double the amount of fat dissolved with this combination.

In the Philippines, Lipolite is currently available only at the Belo Medical Group Inc. (632)2727777.

Quite a number of celebrities have turned into Lipolite enthusiasts...including movie star Joyce Jimenez who has turned to this amazing procedure to rid her body of unwanted bulges. Jimenez credits her very active body to Vela Smooth and loads the machine's ability to remove fat while stimulating the skin's contraction, resulting in tighter, firmer skin.

E-mail: info@belomail.com

VELA Smooth causes biochemical responses that allow fat to be excreted from the body naturally.

PRICE is right . . .

Turn to page B 3

with rubber soling.

Ice

John writes, "Icing an injury constricts the blood vessels, which serves a dual purpose: It minimizes pain and may reduce inflammation, particularly when used immediately following the injury. Ice should be applied as soon as possible after the injury has occurred, held there for 20 minutes, and reapplied three or four times a day for the first 48 hours. Don't apply heat during the first 48 hours, and don't massage the injury. Both will increase the flow of fluids that contribute to inflammation."

John recommends following these guidelines when applying ice:

- Use crushed ice or small ice cubes that can conform to the shape of the injury. A bag of frozen vegetables can as prun or work also works well.
- Wrap the ice in plastic.
- Place a moist cover the skin to prevent it from freezing.
- Use elastic bandage or athletic tape to tie the ice compress over the affected area.

Compress

Keep the injury wrapped with a compression bandage to further prevent swelling. John says athletic tape provides the best, most even firing compression but since it is difficult to apply yourself without training or practice, only a professional should apply it. He next best recommendation is an elasticized bandage and his third option is a Neoprene sleeve. My shoulder area was injured enough to need compression.

Elevate

Injuries in the legs need to be kept elevated above waist level to reduce swelling. Keep the injured leg elevated even while sleeping.

Heat versus ice

John explains that heat and ice are both helpful in healing injuries but they work in very different ways. "Ice increases blood flow by initially closing blood flow and constricting the blood vessels. Your brain then perceives that area of the body as cold, and sends more blood there to warm it up. The first few days following an injury ice can be extremely helpful for reducing swelling."

"Heat increases blood flow by opening up (dilating) the blood vessels. It can be used beginning 48-72 hours after an acute injury. If used earlier, it may increase swelling and inflammation. After two or three days, both heat and ice can be used. Alternating ice with heat (called contrast bathe) can have the effect of flushing scale inflammatory fluids from the area and bringing in nutrient rich fluids."

* * *

The Sports Medicine Association of the Philippines will hold its annual convention "Fitness & Wellness Across the Decades" on Nov. 19 and 20. E-mail sportsmedphil@yahoo.com.

The Association for Fitness Professionals will hold its National Fitness Convention on Nov. 20 and 21. Call Joyce 5463763/5471555.JOG

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Plie pulses

THIS ballet-inspired exercise strengthens and firms up the thighs and buttocks.

Equipment:

None.

Exercise technique:

1. Stand with legs wide apart and feet facing outward.
2. Lower down to a comfortable but challenging position.
3. Do small pulses going down and up in the range of a few inches.
4. Do the desired number of repetitions.
5. Return to standing position.

Performance tips:

1. Keep legs wide enough that you can maintain a straight back in the lowered position.
2. Point knees slightly backward to keep the position comfortable.
3. Always pull remain in the lowered position while doing the pulses.
4. If you feel a burning sensation in the muscles, stop the exercise, rest for 30 seconds and then continue on.

Repetitions:

Do 10-20 pulses. Do sets of two sets.

LIFESTYLE

Great wellness news

INSIDE OUT

Gary Gabrino

WELLNESS is a vast horizon that is endless. That's because there is so much more to discover about the wonders of the body and nature's boundless healing applications.

Here are some welcome developments and new approaches that may promote the health, conscious and the vein in all of us.

Power of natural healing

The National Conference on Alternative and Natural Medicine organized by the Philippine College for the Advancement in Medicine Foundation, headed by Dr. Carmencita Te, will be held Nov. 13-14 at Tsai Vista Hotel in Tagaytay City. Foreign speakers from the United States, Malaysia, India and Taiwan include doctors Jenna Overmann, Sam Chen, Frances Ingle, Chandra Dillon, Dorothy Eyanoth. Local speakers are doctors Omar Andria, Cresencio Bayot, Victoria Echeñez, Elsie Sunga.

Topics to be discussed are herbal remedies to cure psoriasis, healing through ayurvedic medicine, reversing cancer and lupus through muscle-testing kinesiology, panic healing, reversing kidney stones, Chinese medicine. Keynote speaker is Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit, while the closing speaker is Grace Hontiveros, president, Philippine Institute for Traditional and Alternative Health Care.

This is open to the public. Call 3733141 to 43 19439.

Say goodbye to varicose veins

Phlebology is the study and treatment of vein diseases. In the past, serious varicose vein problems were treated through surgical vein stripping. Today a vein clinic that addresses this problem offers a non-surgical solution. Lasers In U, established by Dr. H.L. Liau, brings a revolutionary treatment to Manila called Sclerotherapy. According to him, "Treatment of varicose veins at its early stages will prevent complications like leg ulcers, deep vein thrombosis, thrombophlebitis."

Lasers In U, a branch of its Australia-based head office, offers within seconds upon application of their injectable alternative medicine, the disappearance of unsightly veins. More serious cases, though, will require two to three sessions. It is a non-invasive, no-anesthesia, no-scarring, no-surgery treatment, and instant benefits make this new technology from Australia a welcome development in phlebology.

Clinical trials in Australia and UK have shown that laser and photoderm treatments for varicose and spider veins are not effective because leg veins are too deep for them to reach.

Lasers In U, Angeles Medical Plaza—104

ADVERTISEMENT

Open badminton intercollegiate championships

JVC brings back the 2004 JVC Open Badminton Intercollegiate Championships with qualifying rounds on Nov. 10-12 at Henry Sioson Badminton Center, and the championship rounds on Nov. 14-18 at Glorietta Activity Center. There will also be a shooting competition on Nov. 14, 2 p.m., at Glorietta Activity Center. The competitions will be televised on IBC 13 on Dec. 4, 8-11 p.m., and Solar Sports on Dec. 10, 7-9 p.m., with a replay on Dec. 13, 5-7 p.m.

This year, the focus is on college-level participants, with collegiate men's team and collegiate women's team championship trophies up for grabs. A total of P180,000 in cash, a Boracay vacation package, plus many more valuable items await the teams that finish at the top.

Entry forms are available at IMC Manila, Unit 1411, Cityland-Herrera Tower, corner Herrera and Valero Streets, Salcedo Village, Makati or ABC, 20 E. Mackay St., San Juan. Entry forms may be downloaded from www.jvcbadminton.com.

Call 7331288, 7232868, 0918-3094845 or 09175166876.

THE FAR Eastern University men's team, champions of the 2004 JVC Intercollegiate Badminton Men's Division, shown here with JVC executives and former First Lady and Philippine Badminton Association president Ming Romulo.

No-fuss products for hair removal

VEET Depilatory hair removal products are easy to use and promote the slower process of hair growth. No more cuts, scars and accidental exposure for scar treatments. Veet Hair-removal Cream has two variants: Wee Hair-removal Cream with moisturizing aloe for that extra soft and smooth feeling, and Veet Hair-removal Cream with almond oil for sensitive skin.

Regular use of Veet products makes hair fewer and thinner the next time they come up. Its natural ingredients are the essential elements that give you that soft feel. Exfoliating and moisturizing cream smooth unsightly ingrown hair.

Best of all, hair is removed in just five minutes. It's ideal for legs, underarms and bikini areas. Simply spread the cream on the area, wait five minutes and use the specially designed Perfect Touch Spatula and you're assured to remove cream and reveal silky-smooth skin.

Veet Ready-to-Use Wax Strip leaves you hair free for up to three weeks. You can remove the tiniest hair up to 2 mm long, unlike other depilatories that can only remove 4-5 mm long. With natural ingredients, Veet Ready-to-Use Wax Strips is easy to use. Warm the strip by rubbing it in your hands and apply in the direction of hair growth. Then strip it off and you're clean.

Veet Ready-to-Use Wax Strips for the legs and Veet Mini Wax Strips is for sensitive areas like the face and bikini areas. Wiping down hair growth and makes hair grow finer.

Dissolve your hair problem with Veet Hair-removal Mousse. Spray on for eight minutes and wash off with Veet sponge to reveal supple skin. It comes in two variants: Veet Hair-removal Mousse with Moisturizing aloe vera and Veet Hair-removal Mousse with Softening Silk Extracts.

Veet Depilatory Products are available at leading department stores, drugstores and supermarkets.

VEET Depilatory hair-removal products.

Free seminars on Nutritional Immunology

PROMISE: nutritionally superior health products to Filipinos through the courtesy of Nutritional Immunology is the aim of E. Enzel Int'l. Phils. Your Natural Immunology studies the significant relationship between nutrition and the immune system, and how diseases can be prevented through consistent proper nourishment.

E. Enzel regularly holds Free Nutritional Immunology Orientation Opportunity (NIO-OPP) seminars at 23/F Rufino Pacific Tower, Ortigas cor. Poblete, 2-4 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. every Tuesday. E. Enzel's NIO-OPP seminars are also gateways to business opportunities for budding entrepreneurs who are prepared to go beyond dreaming and pursue a more comfortable lifestyle.

Call 8110807.

Great wellness news

From page C2

U. Bathro Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City. Vascular Surgeons: Dr. Sergio Tolentino, Dr. Serge Sorensbar. Call 8542436 or 8126863.

Goodbye to asthma

Asthmatics have bronchial systems that **usually overreact to a variety of stimulants or** triggers like infection, exercise, allergy, stressful situations, changes in the temperature/climate. To this day, why this happens, no one can say for sure.

While herbal remedies like garlic, onion, horse radish, ginger, sage and apple cider vinegar give relief, there is a new herbal medicine that has recently liberated asthmatics in the Philippines.

Han Good, an asthma clinic set up recently by Han Good Phils., is affiliated with Han Good HRC headed by Isis Dee. It promises an improved quality of life to suffering asthmatics. The powerful organic concoction of Chinese herbs gathered in the Gobi desert, when ingested for 21 days will radically improve (and oftentimes eradicate) asthma. The spicy combination mixed with water, taken on an empty stomach will instantly detoxify the body. This author underwent a 40-day detox treatment and the results include better skin, weight loss and improvement of chronic shrinks (a source of asthma).

Dr. Fia Anastacio, an OB-GYN by profession, was afflicted by asthma for 40 years. She is a walking, talking first testimonial to Han Good. Han Good Clinic is located at Atrium Building, Makati Avenue, Makati City. Call 840-8300.

Goodbye prehydromatic skin

At one age, the skin's production of intercellular cements decreases, which reduces the ability to hold water. The result: Dehydration. To maintain moisture, there is a new skin treatment that will guarantee a dewy complexion—vitamin rejuvinile plus a facial mixed with excellent nutrient-rich organ blue.

For acne problems, the sebum treatment guarantees a totally effective and painless way to banish acne.

Call Trini Manrique at 8945877 or 8945279.

Affirmation for the week

"I open myself to limitless graces. And I welcome them into my life. And so it is."

Love and light!